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1803-1805

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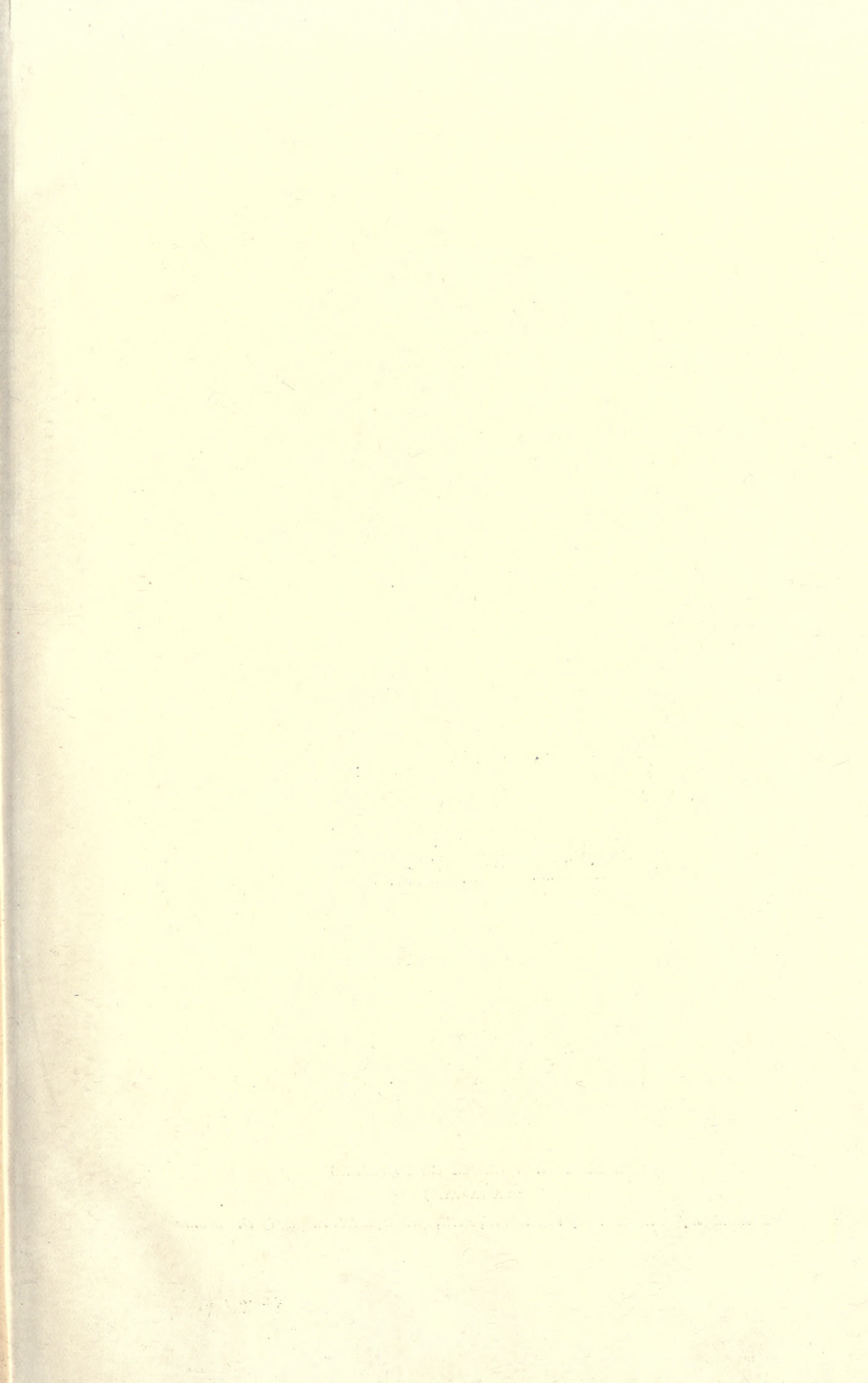
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THE HON. WILLIAM CORNWALLIS
(AS A CAPTAIN)

From the stipple engraving by F. Haward, R.A., after a pastel drawing by D. Gariner

DISPATCHES AND LETTERS

RELATING TO THE

Blockade of Brest

1803—1805

EDITED BY

JOHN LEYLAND

VOL. I.



PRINTED FOR THE NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY

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THE NEW YORK

History of New York

1803-1808

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INTRODUCTION.

THE various papers and documents which fill this volume, and those which are to be embodied in its successor, are an essential complement to the 'Letters and Dispatches' of Nelson of the same period included in the volumes edited by Sir N. Harris Nicolas. Hitherto our understanding of the conditions of the great blockade of 1803-5 has necessarily been partial and imperfect. The character of the operations within the Mediterranean is, indeed, well known, but no sort of justice has been done to the achievement of Cornwallis and his captains. Their work as blockaders was more important and more successful than that of Nelson at the same period. The tenacity of Cornwallis prepared the way for Trafalgar; it had already forced upon Napoleon the consciousness of his impotence, and was to drive him to those continental complications which led to the catastrophe of Waterloo. As Captain Mahan finely says, in a sentence often quoted, 'Those storm-beaten ships, upon which the soldiers of the *grande armée* never looked, stood between them and the dominion of the world.'

In this collection of letters and dispatches the endeavour has been to discern, though it be but dimly, the strategical ideas of statesmen and commanders, to make plain the tactical methods pursued, to indicate the conditions attending the blockade both personal and material, to record the gallantry displayed, the hardships suffered, and the labours undergone, and, in a word, to make known, through the written testimony of the time, what was the nature of the great ocean blockade. It was felt that this matter would be but half understood if the English side only were considered. Inquiry has therefore been made into the French evidences of the time, so that, when we accompany the captains of Cornwallis in their efforts to descry, as best they could, the condition of the enemy at Brest or Rochefort, we are able to discern from time to time important things they could not know. And if, as is indeed the case, the preparations of our adversaries are shown to have been less formidable than at times they appeared, the historical light is truer, and we better understand the blockade. The title chosen for the book does not fully explain its scope, though it implies its limitation. In effect, it deals mainly with the operations under the command of Cornwallis, not merely with the blockade of Brest, but of Lorient and Rochefort, and of the French at Ferrol also, and with the operations generally in the Bay of Biscay, and of the cruisers stretching to the West. It could not, however, ignore the operations of Lord Keith, Sir James Saumarez, Sir Sidney Smith, and others, though only a few

important papers relating to them have been included. The letter conveying to Keith the ideas of the Admiralty as to the dispositions he should make and the tactics he should pursue, to resist any attempted descent upon the coast in the winter of 1803-4, is an instance.¹

The documents included in the present volume are taken mostly from the series of 'Admirals' Dispatches' in the Public Record Office. Others are from the 'Secret Letters' and the 'Secretary's Letters to Commanding Officers'; and the 'Orders and Instructions,' the 'Lords' Letter Books,' and in some cases the ships' logs and captains' letters, as well as the records of courts-martial, have been investigated and used. Outside the public sources of information I have to express my great obligation to Colonel W. Cornwallis West, who unreservedly placed in my hands a number of very valuable letters, including the correspondence of Cornwallis with Lord Melville, as well as the letter and order books of the admiral. All but a few of the most interesting of the letters fall chronologically into the next volume, but the letter and order books have been most valuable to me at every step, and the instructive documents they contain have been freely used. I am also greatly indebted to Mr. C. Wykeham Martin, who kindly gave me access to a number of interesting papers, some of which I have included in this volume. The investigation of the French sources at the Ministère de la Marine and the Bibliothèque Nationale, and

¹ No. 136 (p. 169). *Secret Letters*, 1289-95.

in the archives of Brest, Lorient, and Rochefort, was very kindly undertaken, at the request of the Navy Records Society, by the late M. Alfred Spont, of the Ecole des Chartes, and I have profited greatly by his inquiry.¹

Hostilities began in May 1803, earlier than the First Consul wished. He did not anticipate a long peace with England. Neither did he desire it. He was accustomed to remark that the advantages of peace, and its effect upon trade, the arts, industry, and every branch of public prosperity, were only conditional so long as England could throw the weight of her navy and the influence of her gold into the scale. Sooner or later she would break the peace. Why not anticipate her? Why allow her the advantage of the first step? Thus, says Bourrienne, did the First Consul reason after the Peace of Amiens.²

Nevertheless, Napoleon was disconcerted by the turn taken by affairs. The project of invasion, long meditated, was not ripe. The flotilla, which was begun as early as the autumn of 1796, was not ready. Many boats were yet to build, and as-

¹ The death of M. Spont, which occurred at Amélie-les-Bains (Pyrénées-Orientales) on May 2, 1899, is recorded with peculiar regret in this place. He was a gentleman of great erudition, a diligent student, and a writer of many attainments, known to the members of the Navy Records Society through the publication, in 1897, of his volume of *Letters and Papers Relating to the War with France*, 1512-13. It was after a sojourn at Luchon for the recovery of his health that M. Spont undertook the researches of which a part of the fruit is included in this volume. Unhappily his convalescence was not maintained, and the cutting short of his promising career at the early age of thirty-six is a loss to the cause of historical inquiry both in France and England.

² Bourrienne, *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1885, ii. 66.

sembling at the rendezvous, in the presence of a determined adversary, presented many difficulties. The expedition of Hoche to Ireland had ended disastrously, though the idea that inspired it was not abandoned. But the coast and arsenals, during the previous war, had fallen into a grievous state, and little had been done during the peace to set them in order or make good their wasted resources. When Caffarelli became Naval Prefect at Brest in 1800 he found the port no longer what he had known it. 'Il manque de tout.' Notwithstanding the fact that war had been foreseen as early as January 1803, when stringent orders were issued in regard to English agents and spies at Brest,¹ everything remained to be done.

Men were wanting for the forts, the ships, and the building yards. The batteries had not more than a quarter of their due complement. When the Venteux was taken, according to the Prefect, they did not open fire, and their help could not be greatly counted on.² At the Ile de Batz the gun-mountings were rotten; some guns were of calibre too small, and the men did not know how to handle them. At other points upon the coast the batteries were badly equipped and badly provided, and the men were few. So grievous was the condition, in fact, that Caffarelli could conceive nothing worse. Navigation and defence were alike impossible. Disastrous episodes were to be feared, and we might land and spike the guns if we would. Never had he seen such complete abandonment of Finistère.³ 'Cet

¹ *Archives de la Marine*, BB.³ 210, f. 18.

² P. 54.

³ Pp. 73 note, 81.

état est affligeant ; cet état fait pitié ; toujours des contrariétés.' Such is the refrain of his dispatches to Decrès in the summer of 1803.¹ The complements of the ships were also insufficient, and were made up by embarking soldiers and impressing men. The character of the *inscrits* made their value doubtful, and desertions were many. In the dockyard, too, men were inadequate for the work, and masts, yards, and timber generally, copper, cordage, and arms were wanting. At Rochefort the conditions were no better. The continuous drain upon the resources of the port had depleted it of men, and the strength of the *arrondissement* was exhausted.² Scarcely better was the state at Lorient, where men were scarce, and light punishments rather encouraged than repressed desertion.³

On our side no such state of unreadiness existed. In view of possible hostilities, the ships at Plymouth and Portsmouth were partly prepared, and the work of fitting for active service went on rapidly. A large fleet assembled in Torbay, and the greatest effort was made to man the ships rapidly. On May 7 about 700 men were impressed in Portsmouth, Portsea, and Gosport, and at Plymouth the press was the hottest that had been known. There was also a hot press upon the Thames, and in many places where men were accessible. At Portland a serious conflict occurred, and the Devonshire men grew very wary, and retired into the inland country. Rear-Admiral Campbell reported that nothing short of a military force would secure them for the service.

¹ Pp. 57, 58.

² *Archives de la Marine*, BB³, 212, f. 57.

³ *Ibid.* 230, f. 79.

Men were brought round from the Downs and put on board the Dreadnought, and ships were constantly arriving in Cawsand Bay and Torbay with impressed men and volunteers. There seems to have been no great difficulty in completing the complements of the ships, though not all the men were of the best ; but many were discharged on various grounds, and Cornwallis even discharged several fishermen in Torbay.¹

That 'gallant, good officer,' the indefatigable Cornwallis, the life-long friend of Nelson, and, as one may say, in a literal sense, his pattern and exemplar, deserves a high place in our naval annals. Not less by his intrepid courage and fearlessness on many occasions than by his sleepless endurance, extraordinary vigilance, and masterful combinations during the great blockade, he rendered most signal service to his country. It never was his good fortune to be in chief command in any really great engagement, but it is impossible to study his life, or read the papers included in this volume, without feeling that he possessed in a high degree the finest qualities which can belong to a naval officer. It would be unpardonable before going forward to omit in this place some account of his services, the more so because they are comparatively little known ; and in what follows I must express my large indebtedness to what Professor J. K. Laughton has written in the 'Dictionary of National Biography.'

Admiral the Honourable William Cornwallis, who was born on February 20, 1743-4, was the

¹ For particulars of the press &c. see pp. 1-3, 7-10.

fourth son of the first Earl Cornwallis, and a younger brother of the Marquis Cornwallis, Governor-General of India. The boy entered the Navy in 1755, and saw his first service with Boscawen on the North American station. He was present at the reduction of Louisbourg in 1758, and in the Dunkirk at Quiberon Bay in 1759. In April 1761, Rear-Admiral Saunders appointed him lieutenant of the Thunderer in the Mediterranean, and he assisted in the capture of the Achille, 64, off Cadiz on July 17. His first independent command was in the Wasp sloop (July 1762), and he was successively in command of the Swift, Prince Edward, Guadeloupe frigate, and Pallas, in which last he was employed on the West Coast of Africa until 1776. In September of the same year he sailed from Jamaica with a convoy of 104 merchant ships, but arrived in the Channel with only a few sail in company. The merchants raised a vehement protest, but the convoy had separated partly owing to bad weather, and partly owing to the great misconduct of the masters, upon whom the blame ultimately fell.¹

After being in command of the Isis and Bristol under Lord Howe on the North American station, he came home in the Chatham in March 1778, and on August 5 of the same year was appointed to the Lion, 64. He arrived in the West Indies in April 1779, and had a singular part in the battle of Grenada on July 6 in that year. Owing to Byron's

¹ Two instructive letters from Cornwallis to the Admiralty, describing his difficulties during the passage, and again on his cruise out in the Lion with the West India convoy in 1779, will be found in the *Naval Annual*, 1894 (pp. 235-6), in a chapter 'On Convoy,' by Professor J. K. Laughton.

defective tactics, the *Lion*, which was one of the leading ships, suffered severely, and, almost dismasted, drifted to leeward, so that, when D'Estaing tacked and returned to St. George's Bay, she was cut off, and but for the Frenchman's caution might have been captured. After refitting at Jamaica the *Lion* cruised in the Windward Passage, and on March 21, 1780, in company with the *Ruby*, 64, and two frigates, had a sharp and unequal engagement with four French ships of the line and a frigate, which, however, drew off to protect their convoy. Three months later, near Bermuda, he fell in with the squadron of M. de Ternay conveying M. de Rochambeau and the French troops to North America ; but, although the force with Cornwallis was very inferior in strength, the French, after a desultory exchange of fire, kept their course.

At this time Cornwallis formed his lifelong friendship with Nelson, each appreciating the fine qualities of the other, and when Nelson, after the Nicaragua expedition, was invalided from the *Janus* at the close of the year, Cornwallis brought him home in the *Lion*. The high regard which the future victor of Trafalgar had for the gallant officer who kept the long watch in the Channel is expressed in the following letter from Nelson to Cornwallis, hitherto unpublished, of which the original is in the possession of Colonel Cornwallis West, by whose permission I am privileged to publish it here. It will be seen from the letter, which directly refers to the subject of this volume, how Nelson generously attributed to the teaching or example of the gallant captain of the

Lion the principles that most distinguished his career.¹

‘Victory, December 30, 1804.

‘My dear Friend,—I always feel happy in hearing from you, for I never, never shall forget that to you probably I owe my life,² and I feel that I imbibed from you certain sentiments which have greatly assisted me in my naval career—that we could always beat a Frenchman if we fought him long enough; that the difficulty of getting at them was oftentimes more people’s own fancy than from the difficulty of the undertaking; that people did not know what they could do until they tried; and that it was always to err on the right side to fight. I was then at that time of life to make the impression which has never been shaken. But, on the score of fighting, I believe, my dear friend, that you have had your full share, and in obtaining the greatest victory, if it had been followed up, that our country ever saw.³

‘I own I should like to see you with the Brest fleet well clear of the land, and from my heart I hope that will happen.⁴ There is not, my dear friend, that man breathing who would rejoice more than your most attached and affectionate friend,

‘NELSON AND BRONTE.’

¹ Another characteristic letter of Nelson’s, additional to those in the *Dispatches and Letters*, which is included in these pages, is that to Mr. Frere, written on board the Victory, March 8, 1804 (p. 305).

² The reference here is to Cornwallis’s kindness to Nelson when he brought him home, broken down in health.

³ Rodney’s action, April 12, 1782.

⁴ The same idea is expressed in Nelson’s letter to Cornwallis, July 27, 1805.—*Dispatches and Letters*, vi. 500.

These high encomiums passed by Nelson upon his friend are supported by all who knew Cornwallis. The captain of the *Lion* was of middle height, stout and portly, and with a merry, jovial countenance, that won him, notwithstanding his quiet and reserved habits, and his temperate character, the *sobriquet* of 'Billy Go-tight' among the seamen. Later on he became 'Billy Blue,' as is said from the persistency with which he kept the Blue Peter flying whenever, driven by gales from his blockading station, he had to bear up for the shelter of Torbay. He was also good-naturedly spoken of as 'Coachee' and as 'Mr. Whip,' apparently from his open, florid countenance, a habit of twiddling his forefinger and thumb, and the character of his wig.¹ These humorous aspects of Cornwallis's character covered the qualities of a brave, resolute, and patriotic officer, and the odd names by which he was known express in a homely fashion how he was endeared to his comrades in arms.²

When Sir Samuel Hood returned to the West Indies in November 1781, Cornwallis in the *Canada* joined him, and had an important part in the repulse

¹ *Naval Chronicle*, 1804, xi. 100.

² The following story—which, though inaccurate in details, may have a basis of fact—is told of him when he was in command of the *Canada*, 74, in which he sailed for North America under the orders of Rear-Admiral Digby in August 1781. The men, it is said, having mutinied, declared they would not fire a shot until they were paid, but Cornwallis brought them to reason by saying: 'My lads, the money cannot be paid till we return to port, and, as to your not fighting, I'll clap you alongside of the first large ship of the enemy I see, when the devil himself can't keep you from it.'—*Naval Chronicle*, 1804, xi. 14.

of De Grasse at St. Kitts on January 26, 1782, and again in the famous actions of April 9 and 12 to leeward of Dominica between Rodney and De Grasse. The story of the action must not be told here. It will be found at length in the 'Letters of Sir Samuel Hood,' edited by Mr. Hannay for the Navy Records Society, with Hood's strong condemnation of Rodney for not pursuing and completing the victory. How far Hood's view was entertained by the captains has not hitherto been fully known. That Nelson shared it, though he was not present in the engagement, will be seen from the letter quoted above. It was from Hood that he had learned what he knew of the affair. Mr. C. Wykeham Martin has kindly placed in my hands a writing which undoubtedly expresses Cornwallis's view. It is a versified account of the action of April 12, written roughly in Cornwallis's own very difficult hand, though we cannot feel quite certain that it was his own composition. Presumably he circulated it among his friends in the fleet. As verse it is of the poorest, but, as expressing the private judgment of one of Rodney's most prominent captains—and doubtless of many more—it is extremely valuable. Although it does not concern the special subject of this book, it is significant in the life of Cornwallis, and I shall venture to publish here the halting, but bitingly sarcastic, lines :—

On April the twelfth, by the dawn of the day,
The French fleet were discovered to have bore away.
The loss of a foremast to one of their fleet ¹
Gave cause to us Britons, our prospect to greet.

¹ The Zélé.

We formed our line, boys, in haste to be sure,
For a sudden attack is the dread of Monsieur.
Our tacks, they were different—the French on the lar-board—
With a full sail to meet them, we stood on the starboard.
Drake commanded the van (whose ships were all good),
The rear (some of whom had suffered the ninth) under Hood.
The French suffered most in meeting [?] the tack,
And the Glorieux, a 74, lay a mere wreck.
The topsails of the French admiral¹ were both of them shot down,
And he seem'd then to lie ready our honour to crown.
Many more of their ships were brought very low,
And with their wood bottoms² scarce able to go.

It was now only ten, my brave boys—'twas no more—
Had e'er England a prospect so glorious before?
Our Admiral seized the moment a maintopsail to bend,
But for masts, sail, and rigging, there seem'd no need to mend.
The Formidable³ look'd all so spruce and so new,
A bold leader she wanted, and seem'd to call for Sir Hugh.⁴
The maintopsail when bent, my brave boys, alack!
What use did they put it to? Why, laid it aback!
The French fleet were beaten and put to the run,
And the English with copper bottoms look'd on the fun.
To larboard a sweep did Hood's squadron make,
And the Cæsar and Ardent did both of them take.
Our chief, he lay quiet, with good ships around him—
Some willing to move, but the devil confound him!

¹ The Ville de Paris, 110, flag-ship of De Grasse.

² *I.e.* not coppered.

³ Rodney's flag-ship.

⁴ Sir Hugh Palliser, whose flag was in the Formidable in the Battle of Ushant, July 27, 1778.

He made no signal to chase, nor would let others go—
Those who were willing to follow the foe.

Cries Fanshawe¹ : ' Sir George, pray let me stretch on,
My men are all willing, my ship in condition.'
' No, no,' cries Sir George, ' I'll be supported i' faith !
What ! leave your own Admiral, a Knight of the Bath—
To follow a Frenchman with the cross of St. Louis !
Lay all aback, or by —— I'll undo ye.'
A ship or two push'd on, whether he would or no,
Intent upon honour, and to conquer the foe ;
By which the French admiral and Hector were taken,
And this, perhaps, may save our brave admiral's bacon !²
At night he lay to on the victorious field,
Tho' the poor beaten French were ready to yield.
Had a chief worthy Britain commanded our fleet,
Twenty-five good French ships had been laid at our
feet.³

In August 1782 the Canada returned to England as one of the squadron of Rear-Admiral Graves, and escaped with some damage from a memorable storm in which many ships were overwhelmed. After some other service at home, Cornwallis, in October 1789, arrived in the East Indies with his broad pennant in the Crown, as commander-in-chief on the station ; and, during the war with

¹ Captain Robert Fanshawe, of the *Namur*.

² Cornwallis's ship, the *Canada*, 74, which was third astern of the *Formidable* in passing through the French line, and had been engaged with the *Glorieux*, took part in the captures.

³ Hood to Jackson, April 16, 1782 : ' Had I had the honour of commanding his Majesty's noble fleet on the 12th, I may, without the imputation of much vanity, say the flag of England should have graced the sterns of upwards of twenty sail of the enemy's ships of the line.'—*Letters of Sir Samuel Hood* (Navy Records Society), p. 104.

Tipù, when the French were reported to be supplying him with munitions, he claimed and enforced, not without bloodshed, the right of search, to which the French commodore was obliged to accede. When intelligence of the outbreak of war arrived he seized much shipping, made himself master of Chandernagore, and, in concert with Colonel Braithwaite, reduced Pondicherry, where much treasure was captured.

Cornwallis came home in 1794 as a Rear-Admiral, hoisted his flag on board the *Excellent*, and in July, being promoted to the rank of Vice-Admiral, he had his flag successively in the *Cæsar*, 80, and the *Royal Sovereign*, 100. On June 16, 1795, having four seventy-fours and two frigates in company, he fell in with the squadron of Villaret-Joyeuse, numbering about thirty sail, and including twelve ships of the line. The *Bellerophon* and *Brunswick* proving poor sailers, and the wind shifting to the advantage of the French, he was almost enveloped on the 17th, and his rearmost ship, the *Mars*, in danger of being cut off, when he succeeded in making his memorable retreat. He wore to support the threatened ship, thus putting on a bold front, and the fortunate appearance of some strange sail, with the deceptive signalling of a look-out frigate, caused the timorous Frenchman to withdraw with his immensely preponderating force, under the impression that the English fleet was near. Cornwallis arrived safely at Plymouth with the intelligence that the French were at sea, and his bold and successful operation raised his professional reputation to a very high pitch.

He was soon, however, in difficulties. Appointed Commander-in-Chief in the West Indies in February 1796, his flag-ship, the *Royal Sovereign*, having fouled one of the transports in the Channel, he returned to port, and declined to go out in the *Astræa* frigate on account of the 'very precarious state of his health,' which forbade him to sail in a small vessel without accommodation or comfort. A court-martial was ordered, and, though he was acquitted, he considered himself aggrieved, was given permission to strike his flag, and was no further employed under that administration. He was promoted to be an admiral on February 14, 1799, and in the next year succeeded Lord St. Vincent in command in the Channel, having then his first great experience of the work of blockade. Thus, when he hoisted his flag in the *Dreadnought*, in May 1803, on the outbreak of the war, he was an officer of long experience, tried service, courage, resolution, and popular character, though perhaps few suspected the qualities of strenuous endurance and fortitude in hardships that he so conspicuously displayed in the great blockade of 1803-5.

The system of blockade adopted by Cornwallis in 1803 was that practised in the previous war. I shall presently refer to the broader tactical dispositions in relation to the purposes of the French, to the essential character of the blockade, and afterwards to some special matters in the development of the hostilities. Here it may be useful to say that Cornwallis's rendezvous was off Ushant, where, in the early months of the blockade, he had the

Dreadnought (flag), and four other line-of-battle ships, shortly joined by the *Ville de Paris*, to which he removed his flag, and three other sail of the line. The force at his disposal was yet to be increased to twenty-five sail. The inshore squadron, as first formed under command of Rear-Admiral Campbell, consisted of three sail of the line and two frigates, the vessels upon this and other particular service being frequently changed, owing to fresh dispositions of forces, and the need of refreshing and refitting in Cawsand Bay. Cornwallis also maintained a close watch upon Lorient and Rochefort, varied and strengthened as the need changed. It was intended that Sir Edward Pellew, with three ships of the line and a frigate, should take his station off Rochefort—which became a very active centre of the French preparations in the following year—but he was first to intercept certain Dutch ships, under the command of Vice-Admiral de Winter, which were about to sail from Ferrol.¹ Upon what appeared excellent grounds, he went to Madeira in quest of them (see No. 59), but they eluded him, and he began a careful watch upon the French ships which escaped into Corunna and Ferrol, and upon the proceedings of the Spaniards at those ports. Frigates were always cruising to the west for the protection of the homeward-bound trade, and in July 1803, Cornwallis was compelled to employ the *Plantagenet* and *Thunderer*, ships of the line, on the same service.

¹ For particulars concerning the Dutch at Ferrol and their escape, see Nos. 17, 24, 32, and 59.

The situation of affairs at the French ports, which I have described, made it impossible that any immediate aggressive movement should be made on the part of the enemy. It was of far greater importance to the First Consul that the ships returning from the West Indies should first reach the home ports in safety. Things went very badly at Cape Français, for the ravages of yellow fever, the insurrection of the blacks, and the pressure of the British made the place untenable, and surrender at length necessary. Meanwhile most of the ships of fighting value had been ordered home. The *Duquesne*, 74, was captured by the *Vanguard* and *Tartar* (July 25) in the West Indies, but it is important to note that not one of the line-of-battle ships which crossed the Atlantic fell into our hands at the time, though, as these pages show, a number of smaller vessels were captured.¹ This was the most serious failure during Cornwallis's blockade; but an examination of the papers in this volume will show that the blame was in no way attributable to him, nor, I think, to Rear-Admiral Campbell, who was specially charged to intercept the French squadron. It resulted in part, no doubt, from the difficulty of the operation, but mostly from that want of frigates which so often entailed such unfortunate consequences. The *Aigle* ran into Cadiz unimpeded, and the squadron of Rear-Admiral Bedout, consisting of the *Argonaute*, *Redoutable*, *Fougueux*, and *Héros*, followed later by the *Duguay-Trouin* (as well as certain frigates), reached safety at

¹ See note, p. 89, for some particulars of the ships captured.

Corunna. The failure to intercept these six 74-gun ships profoundly affected the subsequent course of operations. It made necessary the maintenance of a strong force off Corunna under Sir Edward Pellew, and afterwards of Rear-Admiral Cochrane, and the presence of the ships in the Spanish ports can scarcely have been without effect in stimulating the enterprise of the Spaniards. Moreover, all the ships took part against us at Trafalgar, and from the mizen-top of one of them Nelson was shot.

The instructions issued from the Admiralty to Cornwallis on June 25,¹ embodying the orders for Rear-Admiral Campbell, were very precise, and in their preciseness misleading. It was confidently assumed that Rear-Admiral Bedout would proceed to the Mediterranean, and would approach in the direction of Cape St. Vincent, or, if he should be apprised of hostilities, that he would first make the Barbary coast. Upon this supposition the orders to Campbell were framed. It was not contemplated that the French might run for Corunna, which, in effect, happened, and the Rear-Admiral was not given such latitude as would have enabled him to provide for that particular contingency. Moreover, with his squadron, comprising the *Canopus*, *Conqueror*, *Malta*, and *Sceptre*, he had but one frigate, the *Doris*, and the *Fox* cutter, which were fully occupied in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar. The result was that the *Aigle* reached Cadiz on July 8, two days after Campbell was off Cape St. Vincent, and that Rear-Admiral Bedout, hearing of the outbreak of war as he approached

¹ No. 42 (p. 47).

the Cape, took a northerly course, and arrived, without being sighted, at Corunna, on July 14, the ships afterwards passing over to Ferrol.¹ The Duguay-Trouin and the *Guerrière* frigate got into Corunna on September 2, after a running action with the *Culloden* and *Tonnant*.² Their success appears to have been due not less to the want of frigates, a deficiency which occupied Cornwallis's attention at the time,³ and, although he does not greatly complain of the difficulty he felt, his action in detaching the *Thunderer* and *Plantagenet* on frigate duties in July is a strong indication of it. The implied censure he received from the Admiralty as to his employment of ships of the line on such service is noteworthy.⁴ Cornwallis's own view was that the French vessels were endeavouring to keep far to the west, so as to warn their own homeward-bound ships of the positions of the blockading squadron.

The actual purpose of Napoleon was not at this time, nor for long afterwards, clear to anyone in this country, and possibly in his own mind was not well defined. There were many surmises, and, as Nelson said, 'the world attaches wisdom to him that guesses right.' Nelson's mind fluctuated between Ireland and Egypt, and there is evidence to show that Napoleon's own plans changed, and grew more grandiose towards the end of

¹ Most of the papers relating to this matter will be found under No. 78 (pp. 85-102).

² No. 110 (p. 139).

³ P. 161.

⁴ See No. 31 (p. 35), note p. 37, and Nos. 72 and 74 (pp. 82, 83).

1804. Many papers in this volume throw light upon the preparations the First Consul was making, upon the inferences these raised in the minds of British seamen and statesmen, and the measures adopted in consequence. I have not found any evidence—and, indeed, none might have been expected—that our seamen and statesmen in 1803–4 attached great importance to the building of the invasion flotilla, which they watched, however, very diligently, or to the project of a landing in Surrey and Kent.

That project, abandoned for a time under the Directory, was adopted afresh by the First Consul, and on the outbreak of war much enthusiasm was displayed in the ports in providing for the building of flat-bottomed craft. The work of construction went on upon the Seine, Loire, Garonne, Gironde, Somme, Oise, Meuse, and Scheldt. The Prefect of Finistère called upon the municipal authorities at Brest to undertake the patriotic duty. ‘C’est du Finistère qu’est parti le premier cri de vengeance contre le Cabinet Britannique.’ A boat of the first class would cost 30,000f., of the second class from 18,000f. to 20,000f., and of the third from 4,000f. to 6,000f.; and the boats would bear the names of the towns that built them.¹ The *maire* of Lorient urged the matter in a patriotic address, in which he declared that France was enjoying the sweetness of peace, while Commerce, rising from her ruins, beheld the national flag flying upon every sea, the manufactures in full activity, and, thanks to the august chief of the State, all the sources of

¹ MS. *Archives de la Ville de Brest.*

prosperity open, when England, moved by jealousy, criminally precipitated war.¹ At Rochefort there was extraordinary enthusiasm, and it is impossible to read without a smile an address to the First Consul, which described him as 'une divinité tutélaire,' watching over the destinies of France, menaced by an 'affreux complot' of the Cabinet in London.² A force of about 150,000 men, with 10,000 horses and 400 guns, was to be collected on the coast neighbouring Boulogne, with its right wing at Vimereux and Ambleteuse, and its left at Etaples, and a great flotilla of *prames*, *chaloupes canonnières*, *bateaux canonniers*, and *péniches*, brougnt from all parts of the coast, was to transport them to our shores. 'Que nous serons maîtres du détroit six heures, et nous serons maîtres du monde.' There is not, however, space here—and it is unnecessary—to write the history of the famous invasion flotilla, though this volume contains some particulars of the disasters and difficulties that befel certain of its detachments on their way to the rendezvous.³

But the views of the First Consul were not confined to the operations of the flotilla. In the month of August 1803, if not earlier, he contemplated an expedition of some magnitude. The *fête* of the Republic (September 23) was to be celebrated by the launch of the *Vengeur* at Brest, and other vessels were to take the water at Lorient and Rochefort. By November 22 the Brest squadron

¹ MS. *Archives de Lorient*.

² MS. *Archives de Rochefort*.

³ See, for example, remarks on p. 291.

was to be increased to twenty sail of the line, including the *Vengeur*, fitted for any service, and there were to be four or five other ships provisioned for two months. A force of 32,000 men was to be embarked in the twenty ships (indicated by name), and in certain frigates and corvettes, as well as in such hired transports as might be necessary, with rations for three months and water for two. At Rochefort 10,000 men were to embark, provided in the same way, and, though ships were expected to arrive from Corunna or the French ports, it would still be necessary to hire transport for about 7,000. These arrangements were shortly afterwards changed, the number of men to be embarked at Brest being reduced to 20,000. Moreover, no possibility of putting to sea occurring at the time indicated, the date of the expedition was postponed until January 1804, which would appear on all accounts to have been a most unpropitious season, and might lend colour to the view that the troops at that time were intended for the Mediterranean.¹

These preparations did not escape the British Government. While, on one hand, very precise orders were given to Lord Keith in the Downs in regard to the measures he should adopt,² Cornwallis, off Ushant, and Lord Gardner, at Cork, were warned in October that an expedition from the French ports would be attempted at the first favourable opportunity, and Ireland was indicated as the object. At the time everything, indeed, seemed to

¹ See No. 102 and the notes following it (pp. 128-31).

² No. 136 (p. 169).

point to a projected descent upon that island, as this volume plainly shows. To meet the contingency the Admiralty contemplated that there should be five sail of the line to blockade the French at Ferrol and Corunna, and that Cornwallis should have twenty more, of which twelve should constantly be at sea—six with his flag off Ushant to attack the enemy very shortly after he should leave the port, such ships as might be necessary off Lorient and Rochefort, and the others, with frigates, inshore. The ships off Ferrol were ordered to be recruited with provisions and stores in Bantry Bay, instead of at Plymouth, and it was apparently at one time intended to place them under Lord Gardner's orders. If the French should elude Cornwallis at Brest, he was to proceed to Cape Clear, and it was thought that the dispositions of Cornwallis and Gardner would prevent any movements being made from the western ports undiscovered; but, as further measures of precaution, a squadron of four line-of-battle ships was stationed between Mizen Head and the Durseys, under the order of Captain Jervis and afterwards of Sir Robert Calder, and a further detachment was to be off Scilly. These arrangements show how strong was the conviction at the Admiralty that the First Consul contemplated another expedition to Ireland.¹ Lord Gardner even reported the rumour that a landing had actually been made in Sligo, and took measures in consequence.

From this time forward Cornwallis's orders to his captains contain frequent references as to what

¹ No. 137 (pp. 174-179) and No. 146 (pp. 188-190).

52 they should do in case of falling in with an enemy's squadron with transports and troops. They were to keep sight of them until their destination was ascertained, communicating then with the Admiral off Ushant, or Pellew off Ferrol, and were to proceed to Ireland if the expedition should appear to be intended for a descent upon the coast there. If the French should escape from Brest, the ships inshore were to follow, spreading themselves between the enemy and Cornwallis's squadron, so that the route they took might be communicated to him, thus enabling him to follow with his whole force. Some of Cornwallis's orders at the time embody what appears to be a very sound view as to the temporary value of a 'fleet in being' in such case. 'The ships so stationed upon the coast of Ireland may, upon the appearance of an enemy's squadron, be able to keep them in check, if not actually attack them, before I can, with the rest of the squadron at that time with me (or those from off Ferrol, as circumstances may happen), be able to get up with them.'¹ Pellew more than once expressed the conviction that the French at Ferrol were destined for one of the ports in France, while Nelson was prepared to meet them in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, it is exceedingly interesting to read Captain Whitby's remarkable criticisms upon Nelson's blockade of Toulon, which will be found in No. 262, with an elucidatory note.² Captain Whitby quite expected to see the French issue from the Mediterranean, release the ships at

¹ P. 190.² P. 343.

Cadiz, Ferrol, and Rochefort, and appear off Brest, 'some morning,' making an array, including the ships in the port, of forty-one sail of the line all told.

This was in June 1804. Meanwhile the First Consul's projects of November 1803, and January 1804, had failed. At the very time when his plans should have been ripening, Admiral Thévenard, naval prefect at Lorient, was haunted by the idea that we should make a descent upon that port, and destroy it, with the ships and the arsenal at Port Liberté. We were secretly forming, he said, a body of 6,000 men, who could only be intended for such a purpose, which he evidently thought, from want of defenders, might be achieved. General Boyer shared the view, and had certain proof that English gold was being used to spread sedition in the neighbouring country.¹ In December 1803, extraordinary endeavours were made for the intended expedition. A decree of the First Consul (December 18) ordered the naval authorities at certain of the ports to lay down the conditions on which transports should be chartered for the troops, and owners were to be made to subscribe to it.² At Bordeaux twenty vessels were selected for the transport of 2,000 men and 500 horses, but the owners either refused to treat, or demanded 12*f.*, 15*f.*, or even 20*f.* per ton per mensem; but they were informed that they would be paid not more than 6*f.*, and that the vessels would be taken either with or without

¹ Thévenard to Decrès, October 5, 1803, *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 211, f. 77.

² *Arch. Nat.*, A.F.^{iv}, 630, No. 14.

their consent.¹ Information as to what was going on at Bordeaux reached the Admiralty, and was transmitted by Cornwallis to Pellew on January 2, 1804, with particulars of the immense quantity of stores and provisions collected, indicating that 'some distant expedition was intended—perhaps Egypt.' He was further informed that Augereau was to embark 20,000 men at Rochefort, in addition to not less than 18,000 at Brest—'supposed against Ireland.'²

But the expedition of January did not take place, although Cornwallis marked a considerable increase in the ships at Brest at the time, and both at Lorient and Rochefort an appearance of very great readiness was reported, with every evidence that the enemy intended to put to sea. In February even greater activity was displayed. The embargo at Bordeaux seemed to have been successful, for thirty or forty gunboats with troops, and twelve sail of merchant ships, with 6,000 men on board, sailed for Rochefort. Other gunboats were to follow, and on the 13th two line-of-battle ships and two frigates succeeded in reaching the port from Lorient. To meet the new danger, Cornwallis immediately made fresh dispositions, as I shall presently show. At the same time the squadron was expected immediately to put to sea from Brest.

Still nothing happened, and it is curious in the light of this activity to read Admiral Martin's account of the troubles of the flotilla at the very time.³ The

¹ Admiral Martin to Decrès, *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 212, f. 233.

² No. 181 (p. 233).

³ P. 291.

stupendous character of the operations contemplated and the sleepless vigilance of the squadrons barring the way made movement impossible. In July 1804 Napoleon was calling upon Latouche-Tréville at Toulon to say on what day he could leave the port, and to meditate upon the great enterprise in hand. Three sail of the line and four frigates were awaiting his movement at Rochefort, and twenty-one were ready at Brest. Marshal Marmont had his army embarked in three Dutch line-of-battle ships and four frigates, with twenty transports, in the *Texel*. At Etaples, Boulogne, Vimereux, and Ambleteuse were 1,800 various flat-bottomed boats with 120,000 men and 10,000 horses. It was at this moment that Napoleon uttered his memorable declaration of confidence, 'Let us be master of the Strait for six hours, and we shall be masters of the world.' Not until the next volume shall we see how the knowledge was forced upon him by the tenacity of Cornwallis and the flag-officers and captains with him that the invasion of England could be accomplished by no such means. His idea was that, in the summer or autumn of 1804, Latouche-Tréville should proceed to Rochefort—leaving Ferrol, where he might be expected—and, with a squadron of sixteen sail of the line and eleven frigates, take instantly a wide course unobserved, and appear before Boulogne; while the Brest squadron, threatening to come out, should keep Cornwallis on the alert to resist its movement.¹ But Latouche-Tréville died in August, and the plans were presently changed.

¹ No. 274 (p. 360).

Evidently the purpose of distant expeditions had been abandoned for a time, if it had ever really been entertained. All the information at the Admiralty tended to show that the main object was some part of the United Kingdom. Lord Melville, however—of whose administrative wisdom I have conceived a high opinion, after reading the correspondence placed in my hands by Colonel Cornwallis West—entertained larger views. The rumour that a part of the Brest fleet was about to put to sea led him to speculate, in July 1804, whether the Cape of Good Hope or the colonies in the Leeward Islands might not be the object. Napoleon's project might be to gain command of the sea in some important quarter; and a detachment escaping from Brest might release the ships at Rochefort and Ferrol, and, with the ships at Toulon, gain superiority over Nelson in the Mediterranean. Lord Melville took the very sound view that such strategy as he attributed to the French would probably injure this country more in its essential interests than 'any desperate attempt they may make on any part of the United Kingdom against such a superiority at sea as we possess.'¹ The rumour to which the First Lord alluded was that a detachment from Brest was destined for the West Indies. Cornwallis regarded the statement as intended to deceive, but he communicated it to Sir Charles Cotton, to whom he temporarily left the command on returning to England in July 1804, in noteworthy orders which will be found in the last paper included in this volume.

¹ No. 279 (p. 366).

From this survey of the purposes and preparations of the French I pass to a brief consideration of some of the special features of the hostilities of 1803-4. Undoubtedly the First Consul, though he did not rightly grasp the main essentials for his enterprise, had a sound understanding of some necessary conditions. In the letter last quoted to Latouche-Tréville he had insisted upon the high importance of seamanship training. On May 29, 1803, Decrès had instructed Caffarelli that Rear-Admiral Dordelin, then in command of the squadron at Brest, was not to suffer the port to be closely blockaded. He was frequently to have his ships under way, both for the training of the ships' companies and to assist the coastwise traders; but the ships were not to be endangered. The Minister remarked that the Admiral would have need of all his intelligence and his zeal to act with the activity and circumspection intended by the First Consul. Cornwallis reported the activity in July, for the French were very busy, he said, on board the ships, and there had been a sham fight between a corvette and a brig of war in the roads. Caffarelli had a full sense of the necessary circumspection. His letters to Decrès are full of the difficulty of moving in presence of the inshore squadron, and Admirals Thévenard and Martin wrote to a like effect. The division of four vessels then ready for sea at Brest could not appear in the Goulet without attracting the English ships, and the smallest accident to one of them would infallibly lead to her capture.¹ Navigation and defence were alike

¹ P. 57.

impossible. The orders of Cornwallis, successively to Rear-Admirals Campbell and Collingwood, Captains Sutton and Jervis, and Sir Thomas Graves, which are included in this volume, indicate, not less than the incidents of the blockade, how vigilant was the watch that was kept.

On the whole it must be said that Cornwallis's knowledge of the situation in Brest was remarkably accurate, though he could not be aware of all the difficulties that confronted Caffarelli and successive admirals in command. The deplorable condition of the port has been alluded to, and my survey of the situation there may here most conveniently be concluded. The scarcity of marines for the batteries was almost equalled by that of seamen for the fleet. After the embargo upon shipping, there was a press for men in May 1803. Officers, with a body of troops, proceeded to Camfront, and seized many. This operation spread alarm in Brest, where a diligent search was also made for men, the gates being closed. In all 137 were obtained, the *maire* raising a great protest against the proceeding; but desertion was rife at the time, and the means of repression were inadequate.¹ Caffarelli lived in an atmosphere of suspicion. He had continual fear of spies and apprehension of the treachery of Chouans, and there seems to have been some justification for his alarm, for the Patriote, 74, was maliciously fired in the dockyard in January 1804.²

At the end of July 1803, the Prefect heard that Truguet was to have command of the naval forces,

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 129.

² Pp. 157, 236.

but the Vice-Admiral's command was not confirmed until September, when Rear-Admiral Missiessy was appointed to one division, Rear-Admiral Dodelin retaining command of the other. Truguet was to exercise the severest discipline on board the ships, to continually exercise the crews, and to allow no officer to sleep ashore.¹ But his command was not a success. Decrès despised him for his vanity, presumption, and weakness. He was jealous of the advancement of Bruix, who had been given command of the flotilla, and felt aggrieved, in July, that he was not promoted to the same rank. He was appointed, however, as a vice-admiral to the command on September 17. Then began an embittered quarrel with Caffarelli. The letters of Decrès to the First Consul in regard to this matter in the 'Archives Nationales' are both instructive and amusing. Caffarelli was working with all his heart and strength, while Truguet treated him with injustice and pretension, and presented a decree for signature which would have annulled the Prefect's position. At length Napoleon had to intervene, and to define rigidly the respective duties of the Prefect and Admiral by decree. The Minister could see nothing but wordy inanity and selfish vainglory in Truguet's letters, while his orders, transmitted to the First Consul, were textual copies of those which Decrès himself had sent to him. The Admiral, moreover, was unequal to his command; he had not been to sea for ten years; in his letters he was careful to declare that the English were everywhere superior; he was too timid to strike a blow, and, sooner or

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB², 84, f. 264.

later, he would leave the squadron before it put to sea.¹

This opportunity was not given to him. Truguet prided himself on being a diplomatist, but he grievously offended Napoleon by expressing the opinion that the title of 'First Consul' was preferable to that of 'Emperor.' Napoleon did not act immediately, but he instructed Decrès, on May 1, that the Admiral was to be removed, on the ground that he had disobeyed orders in not having the squadron under way every day to train the companies in seamanship, to harass the English, and to cover the passage of the flotilla from Audierne. An active officer was therefore to be appointed, who was accustomed to manœuvres, who had lately been at sea, and who knew 'that the loss of several months passed in idleness was irreparable.' In the same letter the Emperor expressed his views as to the practical training of the squadron.² They are extremely interesting.

Vice-Admiral Ganteaume succeeded Truguet, reaching Brest on June 8, 1804, and hoisted his flag in the *Vengeur*. This volume includes two of his reports to Napoleon. In the first, dated June 12, he expressed great satisfaction with the squadron, and declared that most of the vessels left nothing to be desired, and were ready for any service. He was about to organise a squadron to manœuvre in the broader waters outside the Goulet.³ In the second letter, written nine days later, he found very much to desire. It was the darker side of the picture, at

¹ *Arch. Nat. A.F.*^{iv}. 1190, No. 107.

² No. 240 (p. 310).

³ No. 264 (p. 346).

which his first letter had only hinted. There was need for 2,800 additional seamen, and for others to replace 1,069 men who were sick, and 400 or 500 more whose state of unfitness could scarcely be conceived. Their very presence was a reproach. He therefore demanded over 4,000 hardy, well-built conscripts, who had fallen into no evil military routine, and with these he was prepared to answer for the organisation of the force.¹

It is necessary to observe that Cornwallis's blockade of Brest did not differ essentially from that of Nelson at Toulon. The circumstances of the case made it important to 'close-watch' the place, but the purpose was the same. The French were not to be sealed in the port. On the contrary, Cornwallis was constantly prepared for their putting to sea, and his injunction to the officers successively in command of the inshore squadron was that they should not be allowed to come out unobserved and unpursued. In April 1804, Captain Maitland, in the *Boadicea*, was instructed to endeavour to decoy some of the enemy's ships out of Rochefort. The idea runs through Cornwallis's orders that the inshore vessels at Brest were to keep the enemy in check until he could himself bring them to action with his squadron. With this object his dispositions were nothing less than masterly. His own energy, determination, and vigilance inspired his officers, and these pages are evidence of how close was the watch he held upon the French. To understand the colossal character of the business that was in

¹ No. 269 (p. 354).

the Admiral's hand, and the difficulties in which he conducted it, the letters and dispatches themselves must be read. It will be seen, even in this selection, with what vigilance he was ready for every emergency and prepared for each contingency; how he kept to his rendezvous in the teeth of tremendous gales until endurance would have been danger, and he then bore up for the shelter of Torbay; how he varied and strengthened, as the need arose, the watch upon Lorient, Rochefort, and Ferrol; how he arranged for the safety of the homeward-bound trade; what was his system of sending in ships to refit and replenish; how generously he supported his officers and praised them for their exertions and achievements; and how little he said of himself.

The inshore squadron was instituted under command of Rear-Admiral Campbell on June 9, 1803, Collingwood succeeding him at the end of the month. Ships of the line were advanced to the entrance of Brest harbour, and frigates within them, and the force was gradually strengthened as vessels became available and the enemy's preparations advanced. At the time Cornwallis's information was that twenty French sail of the line were ordered to be made ready, stored for six months. The two-deckers were kept inshore, while Cornwallis had the three-deck ships with him off Ushant or upon other blockading service. The operations inshore were greatly hampered at the beginning of the war by the want of armed cutters, but the letters of Decrès are eloquent testimony of the efficiency of the watch, and many papers in this volume

illustrate the conspicuous gallantry and enterprise of those who were engaged in it. Towards the close of October it was observed that the French ships were getting forward, and Cornwallis accordingly deemed it advisable to redouble his precautions. Captain Sutton was then in command inshore with five sail of the line and several frigates, brigs, and cutters. At the same time the Admiral made his dispositions for the winter. If driven from his station by the gales he would put into Torbay, while the ships inshore, if it blew hard from the westward, were to endeavour to gain the shelter of Douarnenez Bay, and, if the enemy should escape, were to join Cornwallis in Torbay or to pursue them, and—the function of the ‘fleet in being’ being indicated once again—to retard their progress, though not strong enough to attack, until Cornwallis could come up with them. It was questioned later on whether Douarnenez Bay might not answer for the whole squadron to watch the enemy, but upon nautical grounds Cornwallis did not take this view.

In November the Admiral became anxious as to the insufficiency of his force for the watching of the ports in the Bay. The weather was growing worse, and a tremendous gale on the 22nd drove several of the ships to Plymouth. In December the Channel was swept by storms. The last week was exceedingly tempestuous, and the ships suffered terribly, the *Impétueux* narrowly escaping disaster, and the *Atalante* becoming almost a wreck. Sir Thomas Graves had been appointed to the command of the inshore squadron, but the ships were

driven to leeward, and suffered much in masts, sails, and rigging, and on Christmas Day, with not a ship in company, he proceeded in the *Foudroyant* to refit in Cawsand Bay, where, on December 28, ten ships of the line had taken refuge. Cornwallis kept the sea as long as he could, having only the *San Josef* and *Dreadnought* with him, but, on December 30, the fury of the gale compelled him to seek shelter in Torbay lest he should be driven to the eastward. The time was not wasted, for lighters were sent round from Plymouth with beer and stores, and killers proceeded to assist the men in Torbay in getting beef on board the ships. It is impossible to read the accounts of the tremendous hurricane of that time without feeling the highest admiration for the endurance and determination of Cornwallis and his officers. 'The gallant Cornwallis,' says the '*Naval Chronicle*' (December 28), 'talks of going to sea and resuming his station off Brest in a very few days, and has actually ordered all the ships in Cawsand Bay that can be got ready to join him on his appearance off this port (Plymouth) at the shortest notice.' As a matter of fact, the Admiral was off Ushant again on the morning of January 2, 1804. Fortunately the wind had been at S.S.W., so that there had been no apprehension of the French getting out. During the whole of December the average number of ships forming the force off Ushant and Brest was only eight; at the end of December the ships were reduced to four; and up to January 19 the average was not much more than six. This state of affairs led Cornwallis to the conclusion that it was not

desirable to divide his force at a time when it was not stronger than that the enemy was expected to sail with, and very stringent orders were issued that the ships in port should rejoin him. There were great gales again on January 19 and 28, and Cornwallis was once more compelled to bear up for Torbay.

At this time it was observed that the ships in Brest Roads were much increased in number, and the Admiral urged greater vigilance on the part of all concerned in the watch. Graves was to be constantly on his guard, and ships were placed between his squadron and the ships off Ushant, so that intelligence of any movement of the enemy might be transmitted at once by signal. The Admiralty was very anxious to keep the ships together. All through the early months of 1804 Cornwallis was kept on the alert, expecting a movement on the enemy's part, and his letters and orders are testimony to his constant vigilance. In March the inshore squadron numbered five sail of the line. Two of the enemy's sail of the line and two frigates having run over from Lorient to Rochefort, the *Defiance* and *Impétueux* were ordered to rejoin the flag off Ushant, the *Boadicea* and *Diamond* being stationed on that part of the coast to observe the enemy. Calder was recalled from Cape Clear at the end of March to take command of a squadron of five sail of the line to check any movement attempted from Rochefort, where, by the addition of ships at the port and accessions from Bordeaux and Lorient, the enemy was in great strength.

In May—the Brest squadron having suffered a disaster through the loss of the *Magnificent* inshore on a sunken and uncharted reef near the Black Rocks—Cornwallis believed that the enemy might take the chance of being brought to action in attempting their object, which was then said to be to get up Channel. Graves therefore received particular instructions in regard to the tactics to pursue. In the event of the French putting to sea he was to be careful not to allow his ships to be separated from the main squadron, and he was to remember that, in the state of the force, it was of the utmost consequence that single ships should not be disabled.¹ Such were the conditions of sleepless watchfulness which had become necessary, and which, doubtless, had told even upon the vigorous constitution of Cornwallis, when, upon the need of repairing and docking the *Ville de Paris*, he took the opportunity of seeking rest, and temporarily left the squadron under the orders of Sir Charles Cotton.

There was another officer engaged in this great blockade whose service demands our admiration almost as much as that of Cornwallis—Sir Edward Pellew, the future Lord Exmouth—whose correspondence is as interesting as anything in the volume. I have explained how the Dutch ships, which left Ferrol at the outbreak of the war, eluded his search. It had been intended that he should take station off Rochefort, but, upon his return, he discovered the squadron of Rear-Admiral Bedout

¹ No. 247 (p. 319).

in Corunna, and awaited there the orders that instructed him to establish the blockade.¹ Pellew's force consisted, at the beginning, of the *Tonnant* (flag), *Spartiate*, and *Mars*, with the *Aigle* frigate; but, as the French preparations advanced, the squadron was increased to five, and sometimes six, sail of the line, with frigates and cutters.

In the blockade of Ferrol and Corunna Pellew showed himself both a fine seaman and a tactful diplomatist. As a seaman he accomplished the difficult task of maintaining his squadron off a dangerous and stormy coast, with no base nearer than Plymouth or Berehaven. He was constantly buffeted by the gales, and suffered terribly in the tremendous weather of December 1803 and January 1804, when, for twelve successive days, the seas were so great that his ships were reduced to the necessity of setting sail or losing masts, and their people were worn out, with a sick list upon an average of above sixty.² The ships were constantly blown off, but early in February Pellew gained an important tactical advantage in adopting Betanzos Bay as his anchorage, where, moreover, the health of the crews was improved, and the ships were subjected to less wear and tear. In taking this step he assumed a heavy responsibility, because the bay had an evil reputation among the Spaniards, who said the ground was foul; but it answered Pellew's

¹ Sir Robert Calder was directed to proceed off Corunna until Pellew returned from his pursuit of the Dutch, and he was again temporarily in command there in August and September when Pellew took the *Tonnant* into Cawsand Bay to replenish and refit.

² No. 183 (p. 237).

expectations, for not one anchor was started during the violent gales of the time.

The correspondence included in this volume will place Pellew high among seamen-diplomatists. The Spaniards were giving to the French the hospitality of the arsenal at Ferrol, to which place Bedout ran over from Corunna; and to discover the attitude of the Spanish Government, as reflected in its naval preparations and the bearing of its officers, was a matter of the greatest importance. Pellew was vigilance itself, but he never willingly permitted the slightest act that could offend the Spaniards, and his own relations with the Governor of Ferrol were conducted in the highest tone of Castilian courtesy. The result was that Pellew was usually well informed of the proceedings ashore, and, notwithstanding the great influence exercised by the French officers, was generally successful in obtaining supplies.¹

Although the Spaniards were doing all that was possible for the French at Ferrol, the arsenal there was ill-supplied, and the work was slow; but pains were evidently taken to give the impression that the ships were further advanced than was actually the case. Pellew was convinced that the squadron was destined for a French port, and if the ships escaped him he would push on for Rochefort, Lorient, or Brest. His task was one of great difficulty, for if they once reached Corunna, where the Duguay-Trouin and two frigates lay—which, in November, he saw small chance of preventing—

¹ See Nos. 105, 189, 204, 210, 211, &c. Captains Prowse and Winthrop were censured for adopting a tone of asperity to the Spanish authorities in their communications.

they might escape thence at their option with a south-west wind. It is probable that Gourdon, who was then in command, saw greater difficulty in getting to Corunna than was at first apparent to his adversary; and on January 7 Pellew wrote to Cornwallis that, if the attempt were made, his long watching might be ultimately rewarded. A little later he said the move to Betanzos Bay had greatly irritated the French Commodore, whose purpose it checkmated. A letter, however, from Nelson to Mr. Frere, dated on board the Victory on January 23, presently alarmed him by its rumour that the French at Toulon had either put to sea or were on the eve of doing so.¹ While Pellew expected to meet the French from Toulon off Ferrol, Nelson looked for Gourdon's appearance in the Mediterranean, and proposed to take a station to prevent the junction of the enemy's squadron, and fight them separately. Quite characteristically he wrote to Mr. Frere: 'Although that is my fixed determination, a victory cannot be expected; yet I think we can and shall prevent their going on any expedition.'² But the truth was that the enemy at Ferrol and Corunna was by no means so ready as his appearance seemed to warrant, and, when Pellew came home in May, he reported that the French proposed to refit at Ferrol, and some of the ships were then being stripped in the arsenal.³

In regard to the Spaniards, Pellew never allowed his judgment to be warped even by the representations of the British Minister in Madrid. He had

¹ No. 209, inclosures A and B (pp. 274, 275).

² No. 236, inclosure (p. 305).

³ No. 243 (p. 314).

seen their readiness to refit the French ships, but, at the same time, no unwillingness to assist, in some degree, his own, and he would take no step that might cause a breach. On December 17, 1803, Mr. Frere informed him that the outlook was dangerous, and anticipated that it might be necessary to authorise him to commence hostilities;¹ and in January he heard that the garrison of Ferrol had been increased to 7,000 troops, and that guns were being mounted in all the forts. At the end of the month the Minister apprised him that it was intended to send out an expedition from Ferrol; and, though it did not appear that immediate hostilities were contemplated, he was recommended to oppose the intended movement from the port, first by a declaration of his intention to do so by force, and secondly, if necessary, by the exercise of force. Upon this Pellew remarked that he had been at pains to stand well with the Spaniards, and should be very cautious in acting as Mr. Frere desired, before it became absolutely necessary, which he did not expect would be the case for some time, if at all.² Pellew continued, indeed, to use the utmost courtesy towards the Spanish Governor, and when he left Ferrol in May 1804, being then promoted to Rear-Admiral, he was able to say that the utmost cordiality prevailed between the Spaniards and the squadron, and was encouraged to believe that stores from the Ferrol arsenal might be supplied to our ships as readily as

¹ No. 171 (p. 222).

² No. 204 and inclosure (pp. 263-266). The Admiralty instructions to detain the Spanish ships and troops if they should put to sea will be found in No. 221 (p. 290).

they were to Gourdon's squadron. He had already procured from Ferrol an anchor for the Malta.¹

The tactful diplomacy of Pellew was followed by the somewhat intemperate zeal of his successor, Rear-Admiral Cochrane, who had scarcely assumed the command when he informed Cornwallis that he was having a 'hard battle' with the people at Ferrol, and was protesting to the Consul-General at Madrid, in the absence of Mr. Frere, against abuses, in regard to which he asked that representations should be made to the Spanish Government.² On June 4, 1804, he claimed to have reduced the victualling to a system in which any successor of his would only have 'to follow the beaten track.'³ The remainder of his correspondence in this volume is mostly concerned with the efforts of the French to complete the complements and equipment of their ships at Ferrol, to which place the Duguay-Trouin had run over, by passing men and stores along the coast and overland to the port.

Among the other important or interesting matters illustrated by the letters and dispatches in these pages, I may allude to the details of the watch at Lorient, Rochefort, and other ports in the Bay, to the relations which existed between the French royalists and the British fleet, to the operations of spies and informers, and to the measures taken for the repression of privateering, the capture of French merchantmen, and, incidentally, to the system of convoy. I have also collected many particulars

¹ No. 243 (p. 314).

² No. 255 (p. 334).

³ No. 257 (p. 338).

concerning the manning and victualling of Cornwallis's ships, though this inquiry could not be carried too far, and the book illustrates in some places the health and discipline of the fleet. To Mr. H. W. Wilson, who has made an exhaustive study of the matter last named, I am indebted for drawing my attention to some important facts, and for notes which he kindly placed at my disposal.

In the years 1797 and 1798 a spirit of great disaffection prevailed in the ships under command of St. Vincent, and many who belonged to the brotherhood of United Irishmen formed a plot to obtain possession of the fleet. At the same period a mutinous spirit existed in the Brest squadron. The United Irishmen's oath was administered in the *Defiance*, and a desperate plot was laid to carry the ship into Brest, and to kill every officer and man that would hinder, except the master. For this mutiny twenty-five seamen were tried, of whom nineteen were sentenced to death, eight being recommended to mercy. The ship was in correspondence with others, and there was a mutiny in the *Captain* before the close of the year.¹ The same spirit existed in March 1800, when the *Danae* was lost to us at Brest through the mutiny of the crew. The men seized the deck, Captain Lord Proby was cut over the head when he attempted to come up, and the master escaped below with his life. In this case the mutineers appear to have been mostly English.²

The spirit which inspired the mutiny at the

¹ *Courts-Martial*, 1798, vols. 85, 86.

² *Ibid.*, 1800, vol. 93.

Nore, and the real grievances which were at the root of 'the Breeze at Spithead,' had their influence also in the year 1803-4. I have not, however, found any evidences of harsh treatment of the men in Cornwallis's squadron, who appear, besides, to have been of a better class than their predecessors. There was a mutinous spirit in the *Pickle*, Lieutenant Lapenotiere, the men saying they were 'discontented and very wet.' They objected to sling hammocks on Sunday, and the boatswain's mate, who received a hundred lashes for attempted desertion, said he had never seen such a thing done before. Later on, off Corunna, several men intended desertion, and an oath was administered to one man 'to aid and assist Bonaparte with all his power and might on every occasion.'¹ A more serious mutiny occurred in the *Montagu* early in the summer of 1804, when the project was entertained by a small party of United Irishmen of murdering some of the officers and carrying the ship into Brest harbour. In regard to this mutiny I have made an abstract of the proceedings of the court-martial, which condemned three men to death. There seems to be no evidence that the men had been ill-treated in the ship, but rather the contrary.²

In pleasant contrast to the few glimpses of mutiny which these pages afford, are the examples of gallantry, devotion, and hardihood with which they are filled. The cutting out of the *Venteux* by the boats of the Loire at the Ile de Batz, in the

¹ No. 127 (p. 159).

² Nos. 248 and 249 (pp. 320, 321); No. 268 (p. 351).

end of June 1803, is a brilliant episode in the naval annals of the time.¹ The seizure of the Providence at the Saints by the boats of the Naiad, under Lieutenant Dean, in the following month, was a gallant and successful enterprise, and brought into our hands a large supply of heavy guns and timber, intended for the French at Brest.² We cannot, with Sir Edward Pellew, but regard with the highest admiration the great courage and dogged perseverance with which Captain Burke, of the Seagull sloop, attacked, near Corunna, the East Indiaman Lord Nelson (taken by a French privateer some days before), and, though injured between wind and water, and with fore yards, rigging, and sails shot away, hauled off to repair, but hung upon the heels of the ship, which mounted nearly fifty guns, until she struck to the advanced ship of Pellew's squadron.³ Intrepid gallantry was displayed by Lieutenant Rowed, of the Sheerness cutter, on September 9, in cutting out two *chasse-marées* near the Pointe du Raz, himself in the skiff, with a volunteer crew, having a most gallant fight, after a long chase, with a French boat that attempted a rescue. This was one of the most brilliant episodes performed by the boats of the inshore squadron.⁴

Captain Masfield, on October 10, reported a very resolute and gallant, though unsuccessful, attempt made by the boats of the Atalante, against overpowering odds, to cut out two French boats driven ashore by his sloop near the Penerf river.⁵ Equally

¹ Pp. 53, 54.

³ No. 107 (p. 136).

² No. 54 (p. 67).

⁴ No. 118 (p. 147).

⁵ No. 135 (p. 167).

brilliant, but fully successful, was the splendid attack made on December 8 by two cutters of the Goliath upon a French convoy near the Sables d'Olonne, of which some were driven ashore, while an English brig was recaptured under the fire of the batteries and of a gun-brig and cutter, though she was defended by 40 French soldiers who were on board. Lieutenant Kent in command, and Lieutenant Langston of the Marines, were mortally wounded in the fight.¹ Three days later the Goliath herself rendered a most excellent service by proceeding up the Pertuis Breton to attack a convoy of 200 sail, of which several were driven ashore, and the rest compelled to disperse for shelter. But for a change of wind Captain Brisbane's boats would have destroyed many. As it was, a gale springing up, with a heavy swell when he was close to the land on the night of the 12th, only by good seamanship did he keep the Goliath off the lee shore.² In the next volume I shall show what a very gallant and enterprising officer Captain Brisbane was, and there are other illustrations of his qualities in these pages.

Another brave officer concerned in much of the work of the inshore squadron, very diligent and enterprising therein, to use Cornwallis's words, was Lieutenant Ussher of the Joseph cutter, afterwards Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Ussher. In January 1804 he captured three *chasse-marées* coming through the Passage du Raz; he went into Brest harbour at night and pulled in his boat along the whole French line until he passed the flagship, when he was chased away; and in March he scuttled and sank two other

¹ No. 165 (p. 214), note, p. 243.

² No. 185 (p. 241).

chasse-marées under a heavy fire.¹ Captain Patrick Campbell of the *Doris*, too—whose enterprise will more plainly appear in the next volume—and Lieutenant Robert Miln of the *Mary* cutter, were also amongst those actively engaged at Brest under Cornwallis, in operating against the flotilla, and impeding the coastwise trade. But it is unnecessary to pursue further the tale of gallantry, which may be read at length in these pages.

A word may now be said as to the method pursued in this volume. In the early pages the details of the operations occupy much space; and in this way the system is first made clear to the reader; later on the routine is brought less prominently before him, and his attention is directed to the larger conditions and circumstances of the time. Considerable care has been devoted to the footnotes, which include many cross-references for the better investigation of any particular subject. The arrangement of the papers is necessarily arbitrary, being chronological according to the dates of the letters and dispatches, except in certain cases, where I have deemed it expedient to depart from this order. Inclosures are placed with the dispatches to which they belong. It should be observed, however, that many of the documents here printed were themselves originally inclosures, though they appear independently in these pages under their own dates. No system of arranging papers like these can be wholly satisfactory, and that adopted may be thought the most convenient. It should be remembered,

¹ Nos. 186 (p. 244), 225 (p. 294).

however, that often the letters did not reach those for whom they were intended until a considerable period after they were penned. Thus, in No. 59 (p. 70) we have Sir Edward Pellew writing to Cornwallis on July 12, 1803; later on, in No. 65 (p. 77), we find Cornwallis writing to Sir Evan Nepean on July 23 that he had not heard from Pellew since a previous letter of June 17. The fact is, of course, that the reader sees Pellew's letter of July 12 chronologically earlier than it reached either Cornwallis or Nepean; but an attempt to arrange the papers in the order in which they reached and influenced their recipients would have led to endless difficulties and much uncertainty.

The portrait of Cornwallis as a captain, about the year 1780, which forms the frontispiece of the volume, is from an engraving after a full-length pastel drawing by D. Gardner now in the possession of Colonel Cornwallis West.¹ An attempt to reproduce the original not having proved successful, a photograph of the engraving was substituted. It is a matter of regret that no satisfactory portrait of the gallant officer as an admiral appears to be extant.

In conclusion I have the pleasing duty of acknowledging my indebtedness to Professor J. K. Laughton for many excellent suggestions, and for his kindness in reading my proofs, with much advantage to the work.

¹ It illustrates curiously the methods of some old print-sellers that this engraved portrait of Cornwallis, having had its day, was issued afresh in 1784 with no other alteration than a new title and the name of another engraver as 'General Burgoyne, Governor of New York, North America.'



CONTENTS

1803-1804

NO.		PAGE
		vii
NO. INTRODUCTION		
1. Rear-Admiral Campbell to Captains Searle, Ferrier, Bedford, Winthrop, and Pearson. April 25, 1803		1
2. Admiralty to Cornwallis. May 6		3
Inclosure : List of ships and vessels under Cornwallis's command		4
3. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. May 6		5
4. Lord St. Vincent to Cornwallis. May 6		5
5. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 7		6
6. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. May 8		6
7. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 10		7
8. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. May 13		7
Note on the press for seamen		8
9. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. May 13		8
10. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 16		11
11. Cornwallis to Rear-Admiral Campbell and the captains. May 16		11
12. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 17		12
13. Mr. Marsden to Cornwallis. May 18		12
14. Mr. Marsden to Lord Nelson. May 19		13
15. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 24		13
Inclosure : Captain Pearson to Cornwallis. May 23		14
16. Cornwallis to Campbell. May 25		16
17. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. May 28		17
Inclosure : List of Batavian men-of-war in Ferrol Harbour. May 20		18
18. Decrès, Minister of Marine, to Caffarelli, Naval Prefect at Brest. May 29		20

NO.	PAGE
19. Caffarelli to Decrès. May 31	21
20. Captain Mansfield to Sir Evan Nepean. May 30	23
21. Captain Williams to Cornwallis. May 31	24
22. Captain Prowse to Cornwallis. June 1	24
23. Captain Wallis to Cornwallis. June 2	26
24. Cornwallis to Sir Edward Pellew. June 6	26
25. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 7	28
Inclosure : Ships sailed from Torbay on May 16	29
26. Cornwallis to Campbell. June 9	30
27. Cornwallis to Campbell. June 11	31
28. Sir Charles Cotton to Sir Evan Nepean. June 11	32
29. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 12	33
30. Ships and vessels detained. May 20 to June 24. (A précis of the table)	34
31. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 16	34
Inclosure : Extract from Captain d'Auvergne's letter. June 5	37
32. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. June 17	38
Inclosure : Captain Geo. Wolfe to Sir Edward Pellew	39
33. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 18	39
34. Captain Aylmer to Cornwallis. June 18	40
35. Admiralty to Cornwallis. June 18	41
36. Sir Robert Calder to Sir Evan Nepean. June 20	42
37. Campbell to Cornwallis. June 20	42
38. Campbell to Cornwallis. June 21	43
Inclosures :	
A. State of French ships and vessels in Brest Road as reconnoitred by the Acasta. June 21	44
B. Report of the French squadron at Brest, as recon- noitred by the Culloden	45
39. Caffarelli to Decrès. June 19	45
40. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 22	46
41. Campbell to Cornwallis. June 25	47
42. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. June 25	47
43. Captain Paget to Cornwallis. June 25	51
44. Cornwallis to Captain Fleeming. June 26	52
Particulars of the capture of the Venteux	53
45. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. June 28	54
46. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. (Ships captured and detained)	55
47. Cornwallis to Collingwood. June 30	56
48. Caffarelli to Decrès. June 30	56
49. Caffarelli to Decrès. July 2	57
50. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 3	58
51. Cornwallis to Collingwood. July 5	59

CONTENTS

lix

NO.	PAGE
52. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 5	60
Inclosure : Collingwood to Cornwallis. July 4	61
53. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. November 29	63
Inclosure : Hamon to Rear-Admiral Campbell. August 25	65
54. Captain Wallis to Collingwood. July 5	67
55. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 7	68
56. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 10	69
57. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. (Ships captured and detained).	69
58. Cornwallis to Collingwood. July 12	70
59. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. July 12	70
60. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 15	72
61. Captain Paget to Cornwallis. July 16	73
62. Cornwallis to Collingwood. July 17	74
63. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 20	74
Inclosure : State of the enemy at Brest	76
64. Cornwallis to the several captains of ships off the Ile de Batz. July 20	76
65. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. July 23	77
66. Collingwood to Cornwallis. July 23	77
67. Captain Wood to Sir Robert Calder. July 23	78
68. Captain Wallis to Cornwallis. July 24	79
69. Cornwallis to Sir Robert Calder. July 24	80
70. Collingwood to Cornwallis. July 25	80
71. Caffarelli to Decrès. July 25	81
72. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. July 25	82
73. Captain Hamond to Cornwallis. July 25	82
74. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. July 26	83
75. Cornwallis to Captain Wilkinson. July 26	83
76. Collingwood to Cornwallis. July 26	84
77. Captain Bedford to Cornwallis. July 26	85
78. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. July 28	85
Inclosures :	
A. Secret rendezvous. July 6	93
B. Captain Pearson to Campbell. July 22	93
C. Captain Corbet to Captain Pearson. July 17	94
D. Captain Corbet's intelligence	95
E. Captain Pearson's intelligence	96
F. Lieutenant Layman's intelligence	97
G. Lieutenant Layman's intelligence. June 23	98
H. Lieutenant William Fisher to Campbell. July 26	99
I. Campbell to Captain Buller. July 26	101
79. Captain Fleeming to Cornwallis. July 27	102
80. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. July 28	103

NO.	PAGE
81. Captain Prowse to Cornwallis. July 28	104
82. Captain Hamond to Cornwallis. July 30.	105
83. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 1	105
84. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 1	106
85. Campbell to Sir Evan Nepean. August 3	107
86. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 4	108
87. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 4	109
88. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. August 6	109
89. A journal of the proceedings of the Thunderer, June 28 to July 30	110
90. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 9	119
91. Collingwood to Mr. J. E. Blackett. August 9	120
92. Cornwallis to Sir Robert Calder. August 11	121
93. Cornwallis to Collingwood. August 13	121
94. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. August 13	122
95. Captain Paget to Cornwallis. August 14	123
96. Collingwood to Cornwallis. August 15	124
97. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 15	124
98. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. August 17	125
99. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 18	125
100. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 18	126
101. Collingwood to Cornwallis. August 18	127
102. Decrès to Caffarelli. August 19	128
Further particulars in relation to the same	130
103. Captain Prowse to Cornwallis. August 20	131
104. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. August 22	132
105. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. August 24	133
Inclosure : State at Ferrol and Corunna. August 23	135
106. Collingwood to Cornwallis. August 27	136
107. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. August 27	136
Inclosure: Captain Burke to Sir Edward Pellew. August 27	137
108. Cornwallis to Collingwood. August 30	138
109. Captain Fleeming to Cornwallis. August 30	139
110. Sir Robert Calder to Cornwallis. September 3	139
Note on the Duguay-Trouin and Guerrière at Corunna	141
111. Collingwood to Cornwallis. September 4	142
112. Sir Evan Nepean to Lord Keith. September 6	142
113. Sir Robert Calder to Cornwallis. September 6	143
114. An account of ships and vessels detained. (A précis of the table)	144
115. Sir Evan Nepean to Sir John Colpoys. September 7	145
116. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. September 8	146
117. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. September 8	146

CONTENTS

lxi

NO.	PAGE
118. Lieutenant Henry Rowed to Collingwood. September 9 . . .	147
119. Cornwallis to Sir Robert Calder. September 12 . . .	149
120. Sir Robert Calder to Cornwallis. September 12 . . .	150
Inclosure: Vice-Consul Morrogh to Captain Prowse. Sep- tember 7	152
121. Cornwallis to Sir E. Nepean. September 13 . . .	153
122. Captain Elphinstone to Cornwallis. September 13 . . .	154
123. Collingwood to Cornwallis. September 16 . . .	154
124. Collingwood to Cornwallis. September 17 . . .	155
125. Sir Evan Nepean to Lord Keith. September 17 . . .	156
Note on the appointment of Truguet	156
126. Captain Maitland to Cornwallis. September 18 . . .	158
127. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. September 19 . . .	159
128. Cornwallis to Captain Sutton. September 22 . . .	160
129. Calder to Cornwallis. Intelligence from Ferrol. September 22	161
130. Vice-Consul Fernandez to Captain Prowse. September 23 .	161
131. Captain Masefield to Cornwallis. September 25 . . .	162
132. Sir Evan Nepean to Lord Keith. September 29 . . .	163
Notes on ships' movements	165
133. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. October 9 . . .	166
134. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. October 10 . . .	167
135. Captain Masefield to Captain Elphinstone (Diamond). October 10	167
136. Sir Evan Nepean to Lord Keith. October 11 . . .	169
137. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis (draft). October 13 . . .	174
138. Sir Robert Calder to Cornwallis. October 15 . . .	179
Inclosure: Intelligence received from the Sirius. Oct. 10	180
139. Vice-Consul Fernandez to Sir Edward Pellew. October 18.	181
Inclosure: Rear-Admiral Bedout to the British Officer in command off Ferrol. October 15	182
140. Sir Edward Pellew to Rear-Admiral Bedout. October 18 .	183
141. Captain Wolfe to Cornwallis. October 21 . . .	184
142. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. October 22 . . .	185
143. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. October 24 . . .	186
144. Cornwallis to Captain Sutton. October 26 . . .	186
145. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. October 26 . . .	187
146. Sir Evan Nepean to Lord Gardner. October 26 . . .	188
147. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. October 27 . . .	191
148. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. October 29 . . .	191
Inclosure:	
A. Captain Prowse to Sir Edward Pellew. October 28.	193
B. Consul-General Hunter to Sir R. Calder. October 22	193
C. Mr. Silk's information. October 30	195

NO.	PAGE
149. Cornwallis to Captain Sutton. October 30	196
150. Captain Elphinstone to Cornwallis. November 1	197
151. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. November 5	197
152. Cornwallis to Captain Sutton. November 7	199
153. Cornwallis to Captain Moore. November 10	199
154. Captain Wallis to Cornwallis. November 14	201
Note on ships' movements	203
155. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. November 21	204
156. Captain Maitland to Cornwallis. November 25	205
157. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. November 27	206
Inclosure : State of the enemy's force in Ferrol and Corunna. November 26	207
158. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. November 28	208
159. Captain Hotham to Cornwallis. November 30	209
160. Captain Wood to Cornwallis. December 3	210
161. Cornwallis to Sir Robert Calder. December 5	210
162. State of the force at Brest, as viewed by the Plantagenet. December 6	212
163. Sir R. Calder to Cornwallis. December 7	212
164. Captain Durham to Cornwallis. December 9	213
165. Captain Brisbane to Captain Durham. December 9	214
166. Captain Durham to Cornwallis. December 12	215
167. Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. December 14	216
168. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. December 14	216
Inclosures :	
A. Captain Winthrop to Sir Edward Pellew. Novem- ber 29	218
B. Vice-Consul Fernandez to Captain Wallis. Decem- ber 12	218
C. Governor Contador to Sir Edward Pellew. Decem- ber 3	219
D. Captain Winthrop to the Commandant at Finisterre. November 29	219
169. Sir Robert Calder to Sir Evan Nepean. December 15	220
170. Collingwood to Mr. J. E. Blackett. December 16	222
171. Mr. Frere to Sir Edward Pellew. December 17	222
172. Sir Robert Calder to Sir Evan Nepean. December 22	223
173. Captain Martin to Cornwallis. December 25	224
Inclosure : Log of the Impétueux	225
174. Sir Thomas Graves to Sir Evan Nepean. December 26	226
175. Collingwood to Sir Evan Nepean. December 28	227
176. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. December 28	228
177. Sir Robert Calder to Sir Evan Nepean. December 29	230
178. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. December 31	231

CONTENTS

lxiii

NO.	PAGE
179. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 1, 1804 . . .	232
180. Cornwallis to Captain Winthrop. January 1 . . .	233
181. Cornwallis to Sir Edward Pellew. January 2 . . .	233
182. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 3 . . .	234
Inclosures : Captain Prowse's report. January 2 . . .	235
A report of the state of the enemy's ships in Brest.	
January 3 . . .	236
Note on the firing of the Patriote at Brest . . .	236
183. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. January 7 . . .	237
Inclosures :	
A. State of the enemy's force in Ferrol and Corunna.	
January 7 . . .	239
B. Further information. January 7 . . .	239
184. Captain Durham to Cornwallis. January 7 . . .	240
185. Captain Durham to Cornwallis. January 8 . . .	241
Inclosure : Captain Brisbane to Captain Durham. January 7	241
186. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 9 . . .	244
Inclosure : Lieutenant Ussher to Captain Prowse. January 3	244
187. Report by Captain Prowse . . .	245
188. Observations by Captain Moore. January 11 . . .	246
189. Sir Edward Pellew to Consul-General Hunter. January 13.	247
190. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 19 . . .	248
Inclosure : Ships off Ushant and Brest . . .	250
191. Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis. January 20 . . .	252
Inclosure : Mr. Frere to Lord Hawkesbury. December 27,	
1803 . . .	252
192. Captain Hotham to Cornwallis. January 20 . . .	253
193. Captain Durham to Cornwallis. January 20 . . .	254
194. Captain De Courcy to Cornwallis. January 22 . . .	255
195. Captain Hotham to Cornwallis. January 25 . . .	256
196. Admiralty Minute. January 25 . . .	256
197. Captain William Selby to Sir James Saumarez. January 26	257
198. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 27 . . .	258
199. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 29 . . .	259
200. Cornwallis to Sir Evan Nepean. January 29 . . .	259
201. Cornwallis to Captain Ryder (Regulating Officer, Falmouth).	
January 31 . . .	260
202. Cornwallis to Captain Rathbone. February 1 . . .	261
203. Admiralty to Cornwallis. February 4 . . .	262
204. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. February 6 . . .	263
Inclosures :	
A. Mr. Frere to Sir Edward Pellew. January 28 . . .	265
B. Mr. Frere to Sir Edward Pellew. January 28 . . .	267
C. State of the Spanish naval force in Ferrol. February 5	268

NO.		PAGE
	D. State of the enemy's force in Ferrol and Corunna.	
	February 5	269
205.	Captain Maitland to Cornwallis. February 6	270
206.	Observations made by the Joseph cutter of the enemy's ships in the outer roads of Brest, February 7	271
207.	Captain Prowse to Cornwallis. February 12	271
208.	Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. February 16	272
209.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. February 16	273
	Inclosures :	
	A. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. February 9	274
	B. Lord Nelson to Mr. Frere. January 23	275
	Note on the same	275
210.	Governor Contador to Sir Edward Pellew. February 14	276
211.	Sir E. Pellew to Governor Contador. February 16	277
212.	Lieutenant Ussher to Cornwallis. February 17	279
213.	Cornwallis to Captain Lord A. Beauclerc. February 21	279
214.	Cornwallis to Sir Edward Pellew. February 21	280
215.	Cornwallis to Captain Durham. February 22	280
216.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. February 22	281
	Inclosures :	
	A. List of ships in Brest Roads, reconnoitred by the Sirius. February 20	282
	B. Captain Scott to Cornwallis. February 20	283
	C. Remarks, &c., on board the Niobe, between the 11th of February, 1804, and the 16th following	284
217.	Intelligence gained by Captain Durham. February 23	285
218.	Cornwallis to Captain Patrick Campbell. February 24	286
219.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. February 26	287
220.	Cornwallis to Captain Elphinstone. February 27	288
221.	Cornwallis to Sir Edward Pellew, or the senior officer off Ferrol. February 28	290
	Note on the French flotilla at Rochefort	291
222.	Captain Elphinstone to Cornwallis. March 5	292
223.	Captain Patrick Campbell to Cornwallis. March 10	293
224.	Lieutenant Robert Miln to Cornwallis. March 12	293
225.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. March 13	294
	Inclosure : Lieutenant Ussher to Cornwallis. March 1	294
226.	Cornwallis to Captain Masefield. March 16	295
227.	Captain F. L. Maitland to Lord Gardner. March 17	296
228.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. March 23	297
229.	Cornwallis to Sir Robert Calder. March 25	297
230.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. March 27	298
231.	Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. March 29	299
232.	Cornwallis to Captain Martin. March 31	299

CONTENTS

lxx

NO.	PAGE
233. The Lord Mayor of London to Cornwallis. April 9 . . .	301
Inclosure : Resolutions of the Corporation of London.	
April 9	302
234. Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. April 11	303
235. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. April 12	303
Inclosure : The state of the enemy's force in the port of	
Rochefort, April 6	304
236. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. April 11	305
Inclosure : Lord Nelson to Mr. Frere. March 8	305
237. Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. April 16	306
238. Sir Thomas Graves to Cornwallis. April 19	308
239. Captain Patrick Campbell to Cornwallis. April 30	309
240. Napoleon to Decrès. May 1	310
241. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. May 2	313
242. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. May 2	313
243. Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis. May 9	314
Inclosures : State of the Spanish force at Ferrol. May 9.	316
State of the enemy's force at Ferrol and Corunna.	
May 9	316
244. Cochrane to Mr. Marsden. May 9	317
245. Mr. Marsden to Cornwallis. May 12	318
246. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. May 13	319
247. Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. May 13	319
248. Cornwallis to the respective captains and commanders.	
May 14	320
249. Captain Otway to Sir Thomas Graves. May 15	321
250. Cornwallis to Cochrane. May 16	322
251. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. May 17	323
252. Cornwallis to Sir Thomas Graves. May 17	324
253. Sir Sydney Smith to Lord Keith. May 17	325
254. Sir R. Calder to Cornwallis. May 25	330
Inclosures :	
A. Captain Brisbane to Sir R. Calder. May 22	331
B. Intelligence gained from the American ship Little	
John, by Lieutenant Thomas Simons, of the Defiance,	
May 28	333
Note on naval construction at Rochefort and Lorient	333
255. Cochrane to Cornwallis. May 26	334
Inclosure : Cochrane to Consul-General Hunter May 26	335
256. Captain Stopford to Cochrane. May 29	337
Note on the appointment of Ganteaume	338
257. Cochrane to Lord Melville. June 4	338
258. Lord Melville to Cochrane	339
259. Cochrane to Mr. Marsden. June 5	340

NO.	PAGE
260. Cochrane to Mr. Marsden. June 6	341
Inclosure : Statement of the enemy's ships at Ferrol. June 6	341
261. Sir R. Calder to Cornwallis. June 8	342
262. Captain Whitby to Cornwallis. June 11	343
263. Cornwallis to Mr. Marsden. June 12	346
264. Ganteaume to Napoleon. June 12	347
265. Cochrane to Lord Melville. June 15	348
Inclosure : French boats at Cedeira	349
266. Captain Stopford to Cornwallis. June 16.	349
267. Vice-Consul O'Brien to Cochrane. June 5	350
268. Minutes of proceedings of a court-martial held on board the Salvador del Mundo, June 19, 1804	351
269. Ganteaume to Napoleon. June 21	354
Note on the situation at Lorient and Rochefort	355
270. Lieutenant Bourne to Cornwallis. June 23	357
271. Cochrane to Cornwallis. June 24.	357
Inclosures :	
A. Captain Duff to Cochrane. June 24	358
B. Lord Robert FitzGerald to Vice-Consul Warre, at Oporto. June 9	359
272. Cornwallis to Captain Patrick Campbell. June 26	359
273. Lieutenant Fennell to Sir Thomas Graves	360
274. Napoleon to Latouche-Tréville at Toulon. July 2	360
275. Cornwallis to Lord Melville. July 9	363
276. Cochrane to Cornwallis. July 12	363
277. Sir Thomas Graves to Cornwallis. July 13	365
278. Cochrane to Lord Melville. July 13	365
279. Lord Melville to Cornwallis. July 14	366
280. Cornwallis to Sir Charles Cotton. July 17	368

THE HON. WILLIAM CORNWALLIS *Frontispiece*
*From the stipple engraving by F. Haward, R.A., after a
pastel drawing by D. Gardner.*

MAP OF THE APPROACHES TO THE PORT OF BREST *To face p.* 32

MAP OF THE COASTS OF FRANCE AND SPAIN 176



PAPERS RELATING TO THE
BLOCKADE OF BREST
1803-1805

No. 1

REAR-ADMIRAL CAMPBELL TO CAPTAINS
SEARLE, FERRIER, BEDFORD, WINTHROP,
AND PEARSON

[*Secret*]

*By George Campbell, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the
Blue, &c., &c.*

WHEREAS it is intended that a general impress of seamen should take place at the different ports and places along the adjacent coast, and that preparation should be made with the utmost secrecy and caution to perform that service with promptitude and effect, you will, immediately on receipt of these orders, select from the crew of his Majesty's ship under your command a sufficient number of trusty and well disposed men to man three boats, with as many marines and petty officers as you may judge necessary to send in each, under the orders of a lieutenant, to whom you will deliver a press

warrant accordingly; and you are likewise to select sixteen steady marines that may be trusted to go on shore to stop the avenues leading up to the country.

And as it is intended that the party from his Majesty's ship under your command should be employed on this service at :

[Captain Searle,	and	Alarm	
luggers			Dartmouth
Captain Ferrier			Paignton
Captain Bedford			Brixham
Captain Winthrop			Torquay
Captain Pearson			Teignmouth and Salcombe];

You will endeavour to have previous communication with one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the district, applying to him to back the warrants, taking especial care to cause as little alarm as possible.

You will direct the officers you may appoint to this service that they are not to regard the protections of any description of persons, excepting those protected pursuant to Acts of Parliament, and all others who by the printed instructions which accompanied the press warrants are forbidden to be impressed; as also such persons as belong to ships and vessels bound to Newfoundland and foreign parts which are laden and cleared outwards by the proper officers of his Majesty's Customs; the crews of transports, storeships, victuallers, or other ships and vessels in the service of the Navy, Victualling, Transport, and Ordnance Boards; ships and vessels laden by the special order and under the direction of the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury with provisions and stores for the use of his Majesty's armies, &c.; and vessels

and craft in the service of the Corporation of the Trinity House.

On the boats returning to the ships, you will make a return to me of the number and qualities of the men that may have been impressed, and report to me your proceedings on the occasion.¹

But a very unpleasant and serious circumstance having occurred at Portland, it is my direction that this service is performed with as much caution as possible, to prevent bloodshed and violent measures.

Given, &c., Culloden in Torbay, 25th April, 1803.

By command of the Rear-Admiral.

No. 2

ADMIRALTY TO CORNWALLIS

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

The captains and commander of his Majesty's ships and sloop named in the inclosed list being directed to put themselves under your command, and follow your orders for their further proceedings: you are hereby required and directed to take them and the said ships and sloop under your command accordingly, repairing forthwith to Torbay, and hoisting your flag on board such one of the said

¹ The Rear-Admiral, in reporting his proceedings, stated that small success attended the press. Many men had protection. A search of the public-houses and shops of Dartmouth produced only two. Seamen had become too wary, and had retired into the country behind Teignmouth. Nothing short of an adequate military force would insure their being secured for the service.

BLOCKADE OF BREST

ships at that anchorage as you may judge proper, remaining there until you receive further orders.

And whereas we have ordered George Campbell, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the Blue, now in Torbay, to put himself (as well as the ships which may be with him) under your command, and follow your orders for his further proceedings: you are hereby further required and directed to take the Rear-Admiral under your command accordingly.

Given under our hands May 6, 1803.

ST. VINCENT.

P. STEPHENS.

T. TROUBRIDGE.

INCLOSURE

A list of his Majesty's ships and vessels under the command of the Honourable William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c., &c., &c.

Dreadnought	}	In Torbay, or on their way thither.
Neptune		
Thunderer		
Courageux		
Culloden		
Albion		
Venerable		
Minotaur		
Sceptre	}	In Cawsand Bay.
Tonnant		
Plantagenet		
Mars		
Spartiate		
Malta	}	In Torbay, or on their way thither.
Ardent		
Doris		
Naiad		
Hazard sloop	}	Isle of Wight
Acasta		

No. 3

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

Admiralty Office, 6th May, 1803.

Sir,—I have it in command from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that, in consequence of the discussions which have lately taken place between his Majesty and the First Consul of the French Republic, General Andréossi, the French ambassador at this Court, has demanded his passports, intending to return immediately to Paris without taking leave; and there being reason to believe that Lord Whitworth, his Majesty's ambassador at Paris, has left that place under similar circumstances,¹ I have their Lordships' commands to signify their direction to you to send out any ships or vessels that can be spared to cruise at the edge of the soundings, to apprise any ships or vessels they may fall in with of the prospect which appears of hostilities taking place between the two countries, in order that they may be upon their guard on their falling in with any ships or vessels which may eventually be directed to intercept them.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 4

LORD ST. VINCENT TO CORNWALLIS

Admiralty, 6th May, 1803.

My dear Admiral,—The *Acasta* is ordered to Yarmouth to receive your baggage,² and you will

¹ Lord Whitworth left Paris on the night of May 12th, and arrived in London on the night of the 19th.

² The *Acasta*, 36, Captain Oswald, left Portsmouth for Lymington, about three miles from Admiral Cornwallis's house at Newlands, on May 7, 1803.

either take your passage in her or go by land, as you like best. The latter seems, under all circumstances, to be the most expeditious.

Heartily wishing you all possible honour and prosperity, believe me to be, with great esteem and regard,

Yours most truly,
ST. VINCENT.

No. 5

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Newlands, May the 7th, 1803, 4 o'clock P.M.

Sir,—I have received the packet, which you have done me the honour to send by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by a messenger.

I beg you to assure their Lordships that I am much flattered by the appointment they have done me the honour to confer upon me, and that I shall use all possible dispatch in joining the squadron in Torbay. I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 6

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Culloden in Torbay, 8th May, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of their Lordships' orders to me of the 6th inst. to put myself, and the ships and vessels under my orders, under the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis, which I have done agreeably to the ships named in the margin.¹ Also your letter of the 6th inst. containing

¹ Neptune, Albion, Thunderer, Courageux, Russell, Venerable, Ardent, Minotaur, Dreadnought, Culloden.

their Lordships' directions to me to make a general press at Torbay, and in the vicinity thereof, as soon as possible, which shall be complied with

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

P.S.—The Naiad, Doris, and Hazard being on a cruise, I am prevented giving them orders to put themselves under the command of Admiral Cornwallis, but it shall be done on their arrival in port.

The Courageux is under way.

No. 7

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Torbay, 10th May, 1803.

Sir,—I request that you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I am arrived here, and intend hoisting my flag immediately on board his Majesty's ship Dreadnought.¹ I directed Captain Oswald in the Acasta to join me without a moment's loss of time at the anchorage, but I believe the winds have as yet prevented him from reaching the Bay.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 8

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Culloden, Torbay, 13th May, 1803.

Sir,—You will please to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, in pursuance of their directions to me of the 6th inst., for a general

¹ The Dreadnought, 98, flag-ship, was built at Portsmouth in 1801.

press from protections at Torbay and in the vicinity thereof, I gave orders to that effect, of which the enclosed is a copy, to the captains mentioned therein, and you will herewith receive, for their Lordships' information, Captains Drury, Mansfield, and Dickson's report; by which it will appear that only ten men could be kept out of the whole that were detained, two of which have since been discharged by the directions of the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

[It appears from the reports that among the men pressed at Brixham and discharged as unfit were shipwrights, a sailmaker, fishmonger, coal-factor, grocer, cooper, watchmaker, ostler, waggoner, labourer, shoemaker, constable, basket-maker, and others. One man seized was either dumb or malingered. Cornwallis discharged some fishermen who had been pronounced fit. The press at Plymouth on May 9 was described as the hottest since the arrival of the orders. A captain's picket of fifty men paraded the town to preserve order. All available men were brought round from the Downs and put on board the Dreadnought. There were numerous inquiries as to the nationality of men in the ships and their liability to serve, and on various grounds many were discharged.]

No. 9

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Culloden in Torbay, 13th May, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst., brought by post-office

express, and I beg to acquaint you that, in pursuance of their Lordships' directions contained therein, I have been on board the ships named in the margin,¹ and have mustered their respective crews ; and I beg to send herewith an abstract of their state for their Lordships' information, on which I have to offer the following observations. First in regard to the Russell. [Here follow remarks concerning a questionable return as to numbers.] From the foregoing statement I trust that no blame can be attached to the captain of the Russell. The Russell, as far as her numbers go, is a strong, well-manned ship.

The weekly accounts of the ships appear to be correct, but the Thunderer in hers has always reported her complement of seamen 460 instead of 450, and her complement of marines as 100 instead of 110, which I corrected yesterday ; and by her weekly account given in to the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis this day, she is short of complement of marines ten, and only forty-three of seamen and five boys ; but I am sorry to be obliged to state that her men of all descriptions appear to be weak, and a very moderate crew, she having ten more ordinary and fifty-one more landmen than the scheme allows her, and only 101 petty and able.

The Venerable's men of all descriptions are likewise very weak, young, and of low stature.

Ardent. I have the same remark to make respecting this ship's crew, she having twelve less ordinary and seventy-one more landmen than the scheme allows her.

Albion is pretty well off for men, but has ten

¹ Russell, Venerable, Ardent, Albion, Thunderer, Dreadnought, Culloden, Neptune, Minotaur, Sceptre.

more ordinary and eleven more landmen than the scheme allows her.

Dreadnought	} as far as their strength goes are nearly equal in respect to the description of their crews, want- ing only numbers to complete.
Culloden	
Neptune	
Minotaur	
Sceptre	

N.B.—There are some old men on board the Neptune.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

P.S.—Captain Winthrop has always made out the weekly accounts of the *Ardent*, allowing ninety-five his complement of marines instead of eighty, which he accounts for by the column for the number to be borne short of complement in the scheme coming next to the column of marines, which is the case, as he had eighty marines embarked, and the fifteen he supposed he was to go short made ninety-five. I corrected that yesterday, which of course will make her shorter of seamen, as will appear by the weekly account given in to the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis this day.

[On May 13 the *Sirius* anchored in Torbay, bringing 219 disposable men and boys, of whom 132 were landmen. These, with 19 others procured by ships under Admiral Campbell's orders, were distributed among the vessels of the squadron, care being taken that 'too many of the same description might not be placed together in any particular ship.' The *Imogene* brought sixty-six marines, and (with two men from Dartmouth) thirty-nine disposable men, of whom seven able, seventeen ordinary, and seventeen landmen. On May 16 the *Aigle* arrived in Torbay with 111 disposable men from Plymouth.]

No. 10

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, Torbay, 16th May, 1803, 3 A.M.

Sir,—The messenger who left the Admiralty at half-past seven on Saturday evening got on board at half-past twelve this morning. Your letter brought by him, written by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, was immediately paid every attention to.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

[The orders in question directed the Admiral to take under his command the Diamond, Sirius, Aigle, Nemesis, and Atalante. The Sirius and Nemesis were ordered to stretch across the bay to intercept French and Batavian shipping, the Aigle to proceed to Ferrol, the Acasta to gain information off the Saints, and the Atalante (on May 22) to look into Brest.]

No. 11

*CORNWALLIS TO REAR-ADMIRAL CAMPBELL
AND THE CAPTAINS*

[An order to detain and send into port ships and vessels of the French and Batavian Republics, 'until his Majesty's further pleasure is known,' with strict injunctions against embezzlement. See later order of May 25.]

Dreadnought, at Sea, May 16, 1803.

No. 12

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, at Sea, 17th May, 1803.

Sir,—I mentioned, by the return of the messenger, that I had, about 7 P.M., received their Lordships' orders and instructions which were sent by him, and shall be strictly executed. The ships of the squadron were all out of the Bay by eight o'clock, and I have proceeded with favourable winds down Channel.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 13

MR. MARSDEN TO CORNWALLIS

18th May, 1803.

Sir,—I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that they have ordered the Victory to join you off Brest, and follow your orders. It is, however, their Lordships' intention that the said ship shall proceed to the Mediterranean as soon as the service will admit of it, to receive Lord Nelson's flag, and if from the information you may have obtained of the state of the force at Brest you should deem it unnecessary to detain the said ship with you, you are in such case to direct Captain Sutton to follow his Lordship's orders, who will accompany the Victory off Brest in the Amphion, and be guided by your determination either in shifting his flag to the Victory, or proceeding in the Amphion to the Mediterranean.

I am, &c.,
WM. MARSDEN.

No. 14

MR. MARSDEN TO LORD NELSON

19th May, 1803.

My Lord,—I have received and communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Lordship's letter of yesterday's date, acquainting me for their Lordships' information of your arrival at Portsmouth, and of your having hoisted your flag on board his Majesty's ship the Victory, and I have their Lordships' commands to signify their direction to you on no account to pass Admiral Cornwallis so as to run any chance of his being deprived of the service of the Victory if he should judge it necessary to detain her.¹

I am, &c.,

WM. MARSDEN.

By messenger at half-past four o'clock P.M.

No. 15

*CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN*Dreadnought, at Sea, 24th May, 1803.²

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that several French and Dutch vessels have been sent into port by the squadron under my command, agreeably to the directions of their Lordships, but

¹ Nelson saw an implication in this remark and resented it. 'I beg to assure you,' he wrote, 'that I hold it impossible for any officer, under such orders as their Lordships' to me, to designedly miss Admiral Cornwallis off Brest.'

² In another letter of the same date Cornwallis complained of the want of frigates.

I have not been able to get the particulars.¹ I gave, however, the strictest possible orders that there should be no embezzlement, but that everything should remain, as much as the service will admit, in the state the ships or vessels are found in when detained. Captain Pearson, of the *Doris*, has just joined me with a French National lugger, which I am sorry to say, upon his firing at to bring her to, returned the fire and continued a running action until the French lieutenant commanding the lugger was killed, with several of his men; luckily only one man was wounded on board the *Doris*.

The *Atalante* joined me from Plymouth on the 21st, with eighty-nine landmen, whom I distributed to the ships.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

CAPTAIN PEARSON TO CORNWALLIS

Doris, at Sea, 23rd May, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you that, while in obedience to your order of the 18th instant, cruising off Ushant, in his Majesty's ship *Doris* under my command, I fell in with the French

¹ Caffarelli, Naval Prefect at Brest, to the Minister of Marine, 30 floréal, an XI (May 20, 1803):—'Les hostilités ont commencé hier à Audierne. Le brick la *Jeanne*, que j'avais expédié pour aller chercher des bois de construction à Quimper, fut vu par deux frégates qui l'approchèrent sous pavillon français. Il se réfugia sous une batterie et y mouilla. L'équipage se porte aux canons, mais les embarcations anglaises eurent le temps de l'enlever. Le maître seul, resté à bord, fut pris. Un chasse-marée, chargé de sel, allant à Fécamp, eut le même sort' (*Arch. de la Marine*, BB³. 210, f. 126).

Republican lugger *l'Affronteur*, commanded by Monsieur Marcel André Duthoya, lieutenant de vaisseau, mounting fourteen long nines, with ninety-two men. As she made sail to escape me, I fired a shot wide of her, with the hope that she would then have shortened sail, as I was gaining fast upon her. As this was without effect, I fired a second, which she returned, and kept up a running fire till the instant I laid her alongside. Nor did she then give up a contest so fraught with temerity until the first captain and eight men were killed and fourteen wounded, one of whom is since dead of his wounds.¹ I am happy to add that the damage on our side consists only in one man wounded, and a few shot in the hull and rigging.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

R. H. PEARSON.

[The *Doris* had been ordered on May 16 to proceed off Brest with the purpose of gaining information and sending French and Dutch ships into

¹ Chevalier states that her commander and eleven men were killed and fourteen wounded. The French regarded the capture of the *Affronteur* as an act of hostility without public declaration of war. The King's declaration against France was laid before Parliament on May 18th. Two days before that date Cornwallis had ordered that French and Batavian ships should be detained. For the order to 'seize or destroy' French vessels see No. 16. The order for reprisals and letters of marque was issued from the Admiralty on May 19th. The *Affronteur* was off Ushant to observe the British fleet and convey intelligence of its movements to the telegraph there, whence it would be transmitted to Brest. She was reported to have mistaken the *Doris* for a West Indianman, and to have approached with the intention of boarding. The captures of the *Affronteur* and the *Jeanne* were reported to the First Consul by the Minister of Marine as a violation of international law on the ground that the interval between the departure of Lord Whitworth from Paris and the captures would not have allowed time for the transmission of intelligence. He considered the capture of the *Adélaïde* and *Espoir* between Martinique and St. Lucia more flagrant cases.

port. Two days later she was directed to return thither, and not to be drawn from the station.]

No. 16

CORNWALLIS TO CAMPBELL

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of
the Blue, &c.*

The Right Honourable Lord Hobart, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, having signified his Majesty's pleasure that all ships and vessels belonging to the French Republic should be seized or destroyed by any of his Majesty's ships that may fall in with them; you are, in consequence thereof, hereby required and directed to seize or destroy all ships and vessels belonging to the French Republic, or to persons being subjects of the said Republic, or inhabiting any of the territories thereof, which you may fall in with; to give no interruption to ships or vessels belonging to Spain whilst they conduct themselves in a manner becoming a neutral nation, but it is to be observed that their squadrons will not be allowed to enter the French ports.

All ships or vessels belonging to the Batavian Republic are to be detained and sent into port, as before directed.¹

Given, &c., Dreadnought at Sea, 25th May, 1803,

W. CORNWALLIS.

Similar orders given to the captains and commanders of the squadron. [Between May 25 and June 8 the Naiad was ordered to cruise to the

¹ By an order dated on board the Dreadnought, May 16.

southward, the Hazard to proceed to Guernsey to communicate with Captain d'Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon, concerning the force of the French; and (June 5) the Sirius to inform ships that, as soon as the wind should come round to the eastward, Cornwallis would endeavour to get off Ushant, which was then to be considered the rendezvous.]

No. 17

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, at Sea, 28th May, 1803.

Sir,—Having fallen in with his Majesty's ship Victory on the 25th at noon, Captain Sutton delivered to me the letters and orders he was charged with for me from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and from Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson. You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships, I did not detain the Victory a moment, but desired Captain Sutton to follow the Vice-Admiral with all possible dispatch.¹

The Aigle joined me yesterday from Ferrol. Captain Wolfe found the Dutch squadron there, commanded by Admiral de Winter, and the frigate Pallas with Vice-Admiral Hartsinck. By the account he gives they were ill off for everything, and much dissatisfied. Admiral de Winter told him

¹ Nelson to Lady Hamilton, May 22nd, 1803: 'I am not in a little fret on the idea that he may keep the Victory and turn us all into the Amphion. It will make it truly uncomfortable.' (*Dispatches and Letters*.) Nelson to Cornwallis, Victory at sea, 23rd May: 'As I have not been so fortunate as to meet you, and the whole business of the Mediterranean waiting my arrival, I have judged it proper to shift my flag to the Amphion and to proceed in her. If you have no commands for the Victory I trust you will order her to join me without a moment's loss of time.' (Original in the possession of Mr. C. Wykeham Martin.)

he should not be surprised if they were directed to carry troops ; he says they bent their sails whilst he was there, and probably, as it is known that provisions have been sent to that port from Brest, it might be for those Dutch ships, and that they may not be in so bad a state as they represented.¹

I have inclosed the papers relative to what passed whilst Captain Wolfe was there, and have directed him to return off Ferrol to learn, if possible, the destination of those ships, and to observe their route if they should sail.

The Spaniards, it seems, from Captain Wolfe's account, have no naval force at Ferrol in any readiness for service ; he says he saw the hulls of about ten sail of the line over some low land, dismantled and without lower masts.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

*A list of Batavian men-of-war lying in the Harbour of Ferrol, the 20th May, 1803.*²

Oldenbarneveldt, of 68 guns,	{	Vice - Admiral	de
		Winter.	
Revolutie . . . 68 „	{	Captain Musquetier.	
		Captain Lancaster.	

¹ Before the Aigle sailed four Englishmen wrote to Captain Wolfe asking him to procure their release. They had served in the last war, and entered the Dutch ship of war *Revolutie*, 'which it was peaceable times,' for passage homeward. They were now told it was 'war between the English and french,' and were willing to serve. Admiral de Winter wrote to Wolfe that he could not find any Englishmen on board his ships.

² The names of the *Schrikverwekker* and her captain are incorrectly given in the original. After the Peace of Amiens

Schrikverwekker .	68 guns,	Captain Ruysch.	
Pallas	36 „	{ Vice-Admiral Hart- sinck. Captain Holland.	
Scipio, sloop . . .	20 „		Captain-Lieut. Carrega.

Memo.—All but the Pallas much in want of stores and provisions, and none to be had from the Spaniards at Ferrol.

Received orders from the Governor, by the Vice-Consul, that we were to have no communication with the shore, but to put to sea as soon as possible.

No Spanish men-of-war were in the outer harbour, but ten sail of the line said to be in the inner harbour, dismantled.

GEO. WOLFE, Captain.

[Captain Wolfe had been directed, May 17, to proceed to Ferrol, and form a plausible reason for entering the port, so as to disguise his object of gaining information. On May 28 he was ordered to return to Ferrol, and ascertain cautiously the destination of the Dutch ships without betraying his purpose.]

Vice-Admiral de Winter proceeded to the Mediterranean with the Oldenbarneveltdt, Revolutie, Schrikverwekker, and Scipio, while Captain Pieter Hartsinck, with the rank of Vice-Admiral, went to assist the French in the West Indies. On the threatened outbreak of war De Winter was ordered home, and leaving Lisbon put into Ferrol, where Hartsinck, who afterwards proceeded to Java, joined him in the Pallas. The squadron, except the Oldenbarneveltdt, which was unfit for sea, left Ferrol on June 16th. De Jonge, 'Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zeewezen,' 1861, v. 532.

No. 18

*DECRÈS, MINISTER OF MARINE, TO CAFFARELLI,
NAVAL PREFECT AT BREST*¹

Paris, 9 prairial, an XI (29th May, 1803).

L'intention du Premier Consul, Citoyen Préfet, est que le port de Brest ne soit pas bloqué par des forces inférieures à celles de la République, qui se trouvent dans le port. En conséquence les bâtiments aux ordres du contre-amiral Dordelin devront appareiller souvent, et toutes les fois qu'il sera nécessaire, pour purger l'entrée du port de forces inférieures à la division qu'il commande, qui gêneraient le cabotage.²

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB², 84, f. 243. Admiral Denis, Duc Decrès (1761-1820), Minister of Marine from October, 1801, up to the fall of the Empire, was one of the most notable French officers of the time. As captain of the *Diane* at the Nile he displayed great intrepidity. She escaped with the *Guillaume Tell* (80) to Malta. When the French were blockaded at Valetta, he was ordered to leave in the *Guillaume Tell* with 1,000 men and 200 sick for France on the night of March 29th, 1800. She fell in with the *Penelope* frigate, Captain Blackwood, which pursued, yawing to port and starboard, and pouring in a raking fire. In the morning the *Lion* (64) came up and engaged the *Guillaume Tell* yardarm to yardarm, and when the *Foudroyant*, Captain Berry, appeared, being completely dismasted, she hauled down her colours, after a most gallant resistance. She was the last of the Nile ships, and her capture gave the liveliest satisfaction to Nelson. Decrès was brought as a prisoner to England, and upon returning to France received a sword of honour from the First Consul. As Minister of Marine he displayed great energy and unquestionable organising power, and the disasters of the French navy cannot fairly be ascribed to him. Comte Louis de Caffarelli, who served in both the French army and navy, held the naval prefecture at Brest for nine years from July 20, 1800. The first report he made, in August of that year, was unfavourable: 'Brest n'est plus ce que je l'ai vu; il manque de tout.' Levot, 'Hist. de la Ville et du Port de Brest sous le Consulat et l'Empire,' p. 177.

² Rear-Admiral Dordelin had been appointed to the command

Quand même l'ennemi ne paraîtrait pas, la division devra faire de fréquents appareillages, ne fût-ce que pour exercer ses équipages, et dans tous les cas elle doit maintenir son organisation de manière à pouvoir constamment mettre sous voile, au moment même de l'apparition d'un bâtiment ennemi, ou de l'approche de quelque caboteur qui aurait besoin de protection.

Le contre-amiral Dordelin devra dans toutes ses manœuvres éviter avec l'ennemi tout engagement qui présenterait des dangers qui puissent compromettre le sort des bâtiments à ses ordres. Il aura besoin de toute son intelligence et de tout son zèle pour diriger ses manœuvres avec la circonspection et l'activité qui entrent dans les vues du Premier Consul.

No. 19

CAFFARELLI TO DECRÈS¹

Brest, 11 prairial, an XI (31st May, 1803).

Il y a sur rade deux vaisseaux armés sans destination ; une frégate, l'Infatigable, qui mettra sous voile au premier vent favorable ; deux corvettes, l'une destinée pour Saint-Pierre et chargée en conséquence, l'autre disponible ; deux canonnières armées pour Saint-Pierre. L'on arme le Festin, qui sera bientôt prêt ; le Prévoyant, quoiqu'il reste encore une grande partie de son armement ; la Valeureuse, dont l'armement se fait, qui a besoin de radoub dans ses hauts, et à l'équipement de laquelle on travaille avec activité. La Comète est abattue en çarène. La Romaine, la Volontaire, la Pensée sont en mauvais état, et on

of the naval forces at Brest, the 26th ventôse, year XI (March 17 1803).

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 108.

ne présume pas qu'elles puissent être radoubées sur l'eau. L'Affronteur, le Printemps, le Granville, chevillés et cloués en fer, doublés en cuivre, sont aussi en mauvais état, et leur radoub minutieux sera long. Le Foudroyant et l'Etonnante désarment, et auront besoin de grandes réparations. L'on répare les neuf bateaux canonniers. Les canonnières la Hargneuse et le Venteux sont en mauvais état, et la multiplicité de travaux empêche de s'en occuper. Le Vétéran avance assez ; le Cassard l'est un peu moins ; j'ai trouvé les progrès des travaux assez considérables. L'Indienne et la Salamandre ont encore des travaux à faire jusqu'à la fin de ce mois ; elles seront totalement neuves, et à mesure qu'on avançait, tant était pourri, tout a été changé.

Les bâtiments sur rade ont leurs équipages, les autres n'ont presque rien. Le dépôt de la Cayenne ne saurait en fournir. J'ai ordonné d'envoyer à Brest les marins réservés pour la pêche de la morue et que l'on avait laissés dans leurs quartiers jusqu'au dernier moment.

Il n'y a presque plus de soldats de marine : l'état réuni hier ne me présenta que 644 canonniers au port ; il y en a 300 sur les forts. La terre fournit au service du port ; elle pourra garder quelques forts, mais le nombre des hommes pour ce service n'est pas au quart de ce qu'il faudrait. J'évalue la garde des forts à 400 canonniers de marine et 1,300 soldats de ligne, celle du port à 1,400 hommes de toute arme, à raison de deux nuits. L'armement des vaisseaux, frégates ou autres, exigerait plus de 2,000 canonniers ou soldats de marine présents au port, et employés à tous les services, en attendant leur embarquement.

Le nombre des ouvriers a augmenté un peu depuis mon départ, mais il est bien insuffisant pour les travaux à faire en réparations. On les a appliqués aux bâtiments les plus pressés, et je n'ai pu qu'en

approuver la distribution ; ils travaillent aux radoubes dès le point du jour et ne finissent qu'à la nuit. Sans doute on pourrait les employer pendant les vingt-quatre heures, mais cet état forcé ne pourrait se soutenir et l'ouvrage en serait très mal fait. Les ateliers de mâture, voilures, corderie, chaloupes et canots sont occupés en même temps pour les armements ; ils suffiraient avec peine aux travaux qu'ils exigent.

[The letter concludes with a complaint that building materials are wanting—masts, yards, iron, copper, cordage, and many articles of detail—also muskets, cutlasses, and pistols. Dealers in the port were unwilling to supply, because former retarded payments had destroyed credit. 'Experience has taught me that the common defence of the country involves great latitude of authority. We want lead, for example, and the military have more than they require, but I cannot obtain any.']

No. 20

CAPTAIN MANSFIELD TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Minotaur, at Sea, 30th May, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to acquaint you, for their Lordships' information, that I this evening saw the French Republican frigate, *la Franchise*, safe off the *Dodman*, agreeably to signal made by the Hon. Admiral Cornwallis. She was captured by his Majesty's ship under my command on the 28th of May, in company with his Majesty's ship *Thunderer*, having chased from the fleet, and during the chase was joined by the *Albion*, which ship had parted from the fleet some days before in thick weather. The prize proves to be the Republican French frigate, *la Franchise*, from Port au Prince

thirty-five days, Captain Jurien.¹ She is pierced for twenty-eight 12-pounders on her main deck, and sixteen 9-pounders on the quarter-deck and fore-castle, ten of which were in her hold, and had on board 187 men.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CHARLES J. M. MANSFIELD.

No. 21

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS TO CORNWALLIS

Russell, at Sea, 31st May, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you that I yesterday morning detained and sent into Plymouth a Dutch galliot laden with salt, and a French brig named la Rébecca, from Lisbon, bound to Havre de Grace. She has a valuable cargo, consisting of wine, cotton, sugar, Spanish wool, &c.

There was a Portuguese naval officer on board, who had leave from his Government to stay a year in France, and is now desirous to avail himself of the first ship bound to England, in order that he may return to Portugal in a Lisbon packet.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. WILLIAMS.

No. 22

CAPTAIN PROWSE TO CORNWALLIS

Sirius, at Sea, 1st June, 1803.

Sir,—Agreeably to your order of the 25th ult., I proceeded with his Majesty's ship under my com-

¹ Father of the late Admiral Jurien de la Gravière. General Boyer was a passenger on board the Franchise. On June 6 the Admiralty ordered that he and the officers should come on shore on parole, and that the same indulgence should be extended to all other French officers captured in the future.

mand and the *Nemesis* across the Bay to the southward. On the 27th, in lat. $45^{\circ} 53' N.$, long. $5^{\circ} 25' W.$, took possession of the ship *Maître de Famille* from Guadeloupe and the brig *Zéphir* from Charleston. On the 30th, at half-past 10 A.M., lat. $45^{\circ} 53' N.$, long. $4^{\circ} 29' W.$, leaving the *Nemesis* with the prizes, made sail, and, after a chase of ten hours, captured the ship *l'Aigle*, from the Isle of France, with a valuable cargo. The whole of the prizes were bound to Bordeaux; had no intelligence.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
WM. PROWSE.¹

[The *Sirius* also captured the French brig *Three Brothers*, from Port au Prince to Bordeaux, and another brig was captured on May 27 by the *Victory* and *Hazard* sloop.]

¹ Captain, afterwards Rear-Admiral, William Prowse had risen from a humble position, and seems to have served from boyhood in the merchant service. He was an able seaman from 1771 to 1778, and in that capacity sailed to North America with Byron. He was then rated a midshipman and master's mate, and was present in the actions off Grenada (July 9, 1779) and Martinique (April and May 1781). He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in December 1782, but seems afterwards to have served in merchant ships. He was with Collingwood in the *Barfleur* on June 1, 1794, and with Calder in the *Theseus* and *Lively*. He was then transferred to the *Victory*, bearing the flag of Sir John Jervis, and in October 1796 was appointed to the command of the *Raven*, in which he was present at the battle of St. Vincent, Feb. 14, 1797. He took command of the prize *Salvador del Mundo* after the engagement, and was Calder's flag-captain in the *Prince of Wales* until April 1802. In August of the same year he was captain of the *Sirius*, and took a very active part in Cornwallis's blockade. In her he served in the action off Cape Finisterre, July 22, 1805, and was present at Trafalgar. He was afterwards in the Mediterranean, and in April 1806 captured the French corvette *Bergère* off Civita Vecchia, the *Sirius* losing nine men killed and twenty wounded. Prowse commanded the *Theseus* in the North Sea 1810-13, became a Rear-Admiral in July 1821, and died March 23, 1826.

No. 23

CAPTAIN WALLIS TO CORNWALLIS

Naiad, 2nd June, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that on the 29th ult., at 11 P.M., being in lat. $45^{\circ} 5' N.$, and long. $4^{\circ} 40' W.$, I captured the French National corvette l'Impatient, of twenty guns and eighty men, commanded by Citizen Hippolyte Arnous, lieutenant de vaisseau, from Senegal bound to Rochefort. She is a very fine vessel, and is esteemed one of the swiftest sailers out of France. During the chase they cut away her anchors from her bows, and threw part of her guns overboard.

I have likewise the honour to inform you that, on the 31st, at noon, I captured the French merchant ship le Chasseur, from San Domingo bound to Lorient, laden with sugar, cotton, coffee, &c., &c. She is a very handsome ship, 359 tons burden, newly coppered, commanded by Citizen Lamer, lieutenant de vaisseau.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JAMES WALLIS.

No. 24

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW¹

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

You are hereby required and directed to proceed in his Majesty's ship Tonnant, under your command,

¹ Sir Edward Pellew, afterwards Viscount Exmouth, had been returned to Parliament for Barnstaple in July 1802, but, upon the apprehension of a renewal of the war, applied for active employment, was appointed to the Tonnant (80) in March 1803, and

with the ships named in the margin [Spartiate and Mars], off Ferrol, where I have intelligence there are three Dutch line-of-battle ships, a frigate, and a sloop.

You will find cruising off that port his Majesty's ship *Aigle*, for the purpose of gaining intelligence and to watch those ships, and you are to use your best endeavour to intercept those ships, if they should sail, or any French ships you may meet with.

If, however, those Dutch ships should have sailed and are out of your reach before your arrival, you are then to proceed, with the said ships and frigate, off Rochefort, where you are to cruise, and use your utmost endeavour to seize or destroy all French ships or vessels, and detain any Dutch ships or vessels you may meet with.

You are to continue upon this service until further order, and endeavour to gain all the intel-

was commodore of the squadron off Ferrol. Pellew's experience of blockade had been considerable. From April 1794 until the Peace of Amiens he was almost continuously employed in the Channel, first in the frigate squadron of Sir John Borlase Warren, with which he took a prominent part in the engagement of St. George's Day, 1794, then in command of a squadron which captured the French frigate *Révolutionnaire*, afterwards in the *Indefatigable*, with the *Amazon* in company, in the famous action with the *Droits de l'Homme* (January 1797), and in 1799 in the *Impétueux* (74), in which his courage and resolution quelled a mutiny in Bantry Bay. He was recalled to England in March 1804 (when the command off Ferrol passed to Cochrane), apparently in order to support the Admiralty in Parliament in resisting Pitt's motion for an inquiry into St. Vincent's policy. He protested against the idea that the enemy's gunboats should be met by gunboats, agreeing with St. Vincent that the true defence was the fleet, and, from his experience in the Channel, denying 'the probability of the enemy being able in a narrow sea to pass through our blockading and protecting squadrons, with all that secrecy and dexterity, and by those hidden means that some worthy people expect.'—Osler's *Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth*, pp. 204, 223.

ligence you can, which you are to transmit to me by every opportunity that may offer.

You are, during your cruise, to give no interruption to any Spanish ships or vessels whilst they continue to act as a neutral Power, but you are not to suffer any squadron of theirs to enter a port in France, or to form any junction with any squadron, or ships, or vessels belonging to that or the Batavian Republic.

Given, &c., Dreadnought at Sea,

6th June, 1803.

W. CORNWALLIS.

Gave orders to Captains Manley and Sutton to follow the orders of Sir Edward Pellew. [Captain Wolfe was ordered, on June 8, to return off Ferrol, and place himself in the *Aigle* under Sir Edward Pellew's orders.]

No. 25

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, at Sea, 7th June, 1803.

Sir,—In answer to your letter signifying the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to me, to send the rendezvous, and in what manner the ships are stationed :

I am to acquaint you for their Lordships' information that I have not been able to station the small ships on the French coast as heretofore, but only to detach them occasionally for a short time, and I have been obliged to allow them to go into port to land the men who have been taken out of vessels detained. Having received information that two line-of-battle ships had sailed from San Domingo, I detached, while the wind was fresh from the west-

ward, the Thunderer and Sceptre to cruise off Lorient for a week, being two of the best sailers, in case the French ships of war should attempt to get into that port, to give them the chance of intercepting them.

The station which I had first appointed, with a westerly wind, was lat. $48^{\circ} 4' N.$, long. $6^{\circ} 25' W.$, Saints bearing E.S.E. 20 leagues.

I have given out to the ships of the squadron that I shall be close in with Ushant upon the appearance of a change of wind, and that is to be considered the rendezvous with an easterly wind.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

*Ships sailed with me from Torbay on the 16th
May 1803.*

Dreadnought

Culloden

Neptune

Albion

Thunderer

Detached off Lorient.

Minotaur

Venerable

Sceptre

Detached off Lorient.

Ardent

Russell

Doris

Acasta

Detached off the Saints.

Aigle . . .

{ Detached off Ferrol to follow the
orders of Captain Sir Ed-
ward Pellew, Bart.

Frigates and ships joined the squadron at sea :

Sirius	.	Detached, to proceed off Rochefort.
Naiad	.	{ Sent to Plymouth (but not to stay longer than 48 hours).
Nemesis	.	Detached, to proceed with the Sirius.
Atalante	.	{ Sent to Falmouth or the nearest port, to land the men taken out of the French frigate.
Hazard	.	Guernsey and Jersey for intelligence.
June 6:		{ Joined and immediately detached, under the orders of Sir Edward Pellew, Bart., Captain of his Majesty's ship
Tonnant		{ Tonnant, off Ferrol, to watch the motions of the Dutch ships in that port, &c.
Spartiate		
Mars		

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 26

CORNWALLIS TO CAMPBELL

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

Judging it proper that the port of Brest should be watched, as it was in the late war, by some ships of the line advanced to the entrance of the harbour, and frigates within them ;

You are therefore hereby required and directed to proceed to that station with the ships named in the margin,¹ until others can be sent on that service, taking all possible care to prevent the sailing of any of the enemy's ships or vessels from that port, or any considerable force, without my being apprised of it ; and to cause the ships under your orders to be

¹ Culloden, Russell, Doris.

also very vigilant in intercepting any of their homeward-bound or coasting trade which may attempt getting into that port.

You will use all diligence in obtaining intelligence, and particularly of the force in readiness for sea at Brest, and inform me by every opportunity therewith, as well as any other occurrence you may deem of importance that I should be immediately made acquainted with.

Given, &c., 9th June, 1803,

W. CORNWALLIS.

Gave an order to Captain Williams, of the *Russell*, to follow the directions of Rear-Admiral Campbell. Ditto to Captain Pearson, *Doris*.

[Captain Neve (*Hazard*) was directed to stretch across the bay as far as Rochefort and Bordeaux to gain information, Captain Elphinstone (*Diamond*) to proceed southward as far as 45° N., and Captain Hamond (*Plantagenet*) to watch the French line-of-battle ship at Lorient.]

No. 27

CORNWALLIS TO CAMPBELL

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 11th June, 1803.

Sir,—I had written to you when the *Doris* joined me. The information I have received states: Twenty out of twenty-one sail of the line ordered at Brest to be in a forward state of armament, dated the middle of last month; and it adds that they are very completely stored for six months, except in the article of cables, of which, for the narrow seas, they would be rather short. It does not say they were manned, but some time back the levies were sent to

Brest; latterly for the flat boats and craft at Cherbourg, &c.; but I have not learned whether it was in consequence of the ships at Brest being complete, or to make a show in favour of the Consul's project of invading England. I have a list of twenty-five sail of the line at Brest, and it has been said four sail have entered that port from the West Indies. One which the Albion saw and chased, I believe the day the frigate was taken, has arrived at Lorient, where she was seen by our ships.

Rear-Admiral Collingwood is with me, and hoists his flag at present on board the Venerable. I beg of you to send any further information as soon as you are able to obtain it. I had intended sending the *Minotaur* to you, if she had joined, and a frigate, the first opportunity. The prisoners on board the *Russell* shall be sent into port as soon as I have a vessel to send in.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 28

SIR CHARLES COTTON TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

San Josef, in Hamoaze, 11th June, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, in pursuance of their directions, I have this day hoisted my flag in his Majesty's ship *San Josef*, and have the honour to be, &c.,

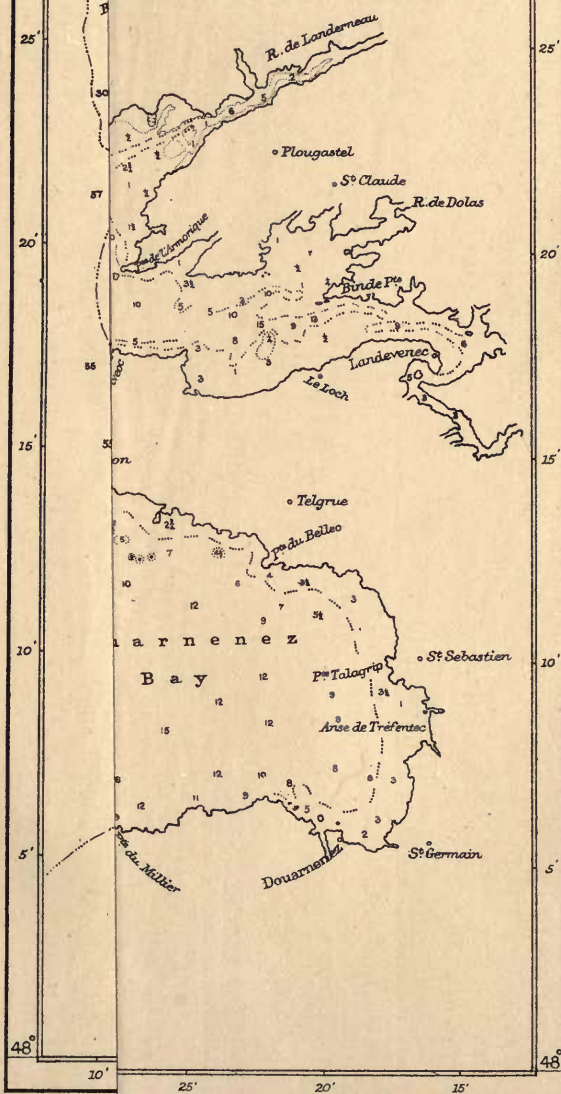
CHARLES COTTON.¹

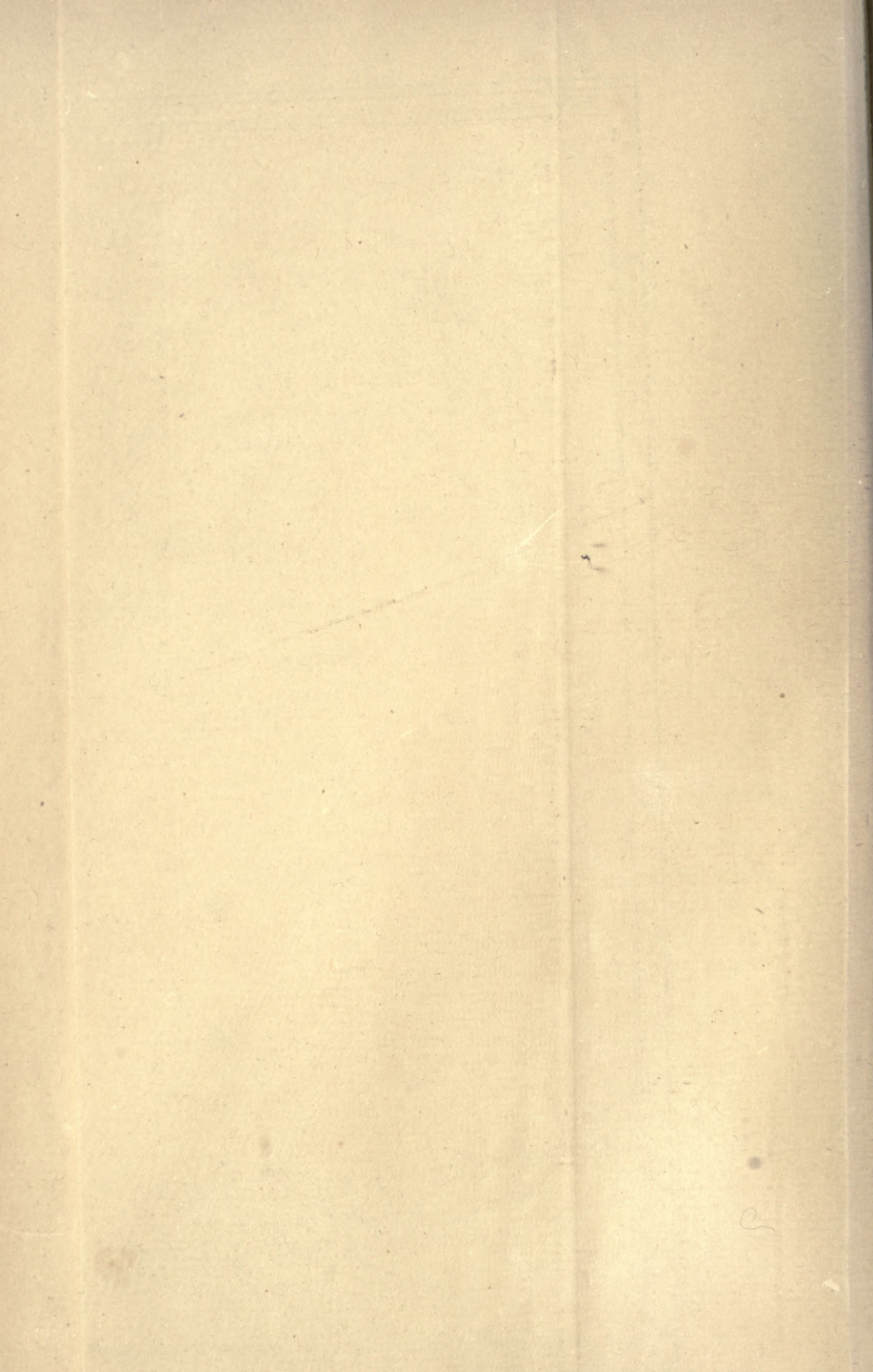
¹ Admiral Sir Charles Cotton entered the navy from the merchant service in 1772. He was in the *Alarm*, one of the repeating frigates in the memorable actions of April 9 and 12, 1782, and in the *Majestic* in the engagement of June 1, 1794. He was in command of the *Mars* on June 16, 1795, when Cornwallis's fleet

Miles.			
7	8	9	10

oms.

T E R E





No. 29

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 12th June, 1803.

Sir,—I send for information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the account given by Captain Ferrier of the taking the *Franchise*, French frigate (the name given me before appears to be a mistake),¹ and of his having fallen in with a ship he conceives to have been a French line-of-battle ship, having separated from me, with the *Ardent*, not having heard the signal to tack in foggy weather, of which we have had a great deal. That French ship is, I believe, at Lorient, and I intend sending immediately a ship to watch her.

The weather has been unfavourable for looking into Brest. Rear-Admiral Campbell, who is stationed inshore, reported to me, upon taking the best view he could get, only one three-decker and five or six other ships, but he will seize the first moment to get a better look in.

I have had accounts from Jersey of a number of ships completely stored for six months, except in the article of cables, of which the proportion appeared small for service in the narrow seas.

Rear-Admiral Collingwood joined me on the

fell in with the French off the Penmarcks, and was the rearmost captain, most exposed to the enemy's fire, in the retreat which won name and fame for Cornwallis. He hoisted his flag in the *Prince* in March, 1799, and pursued the Brest fleet to the Mediterranean in June. On the outbreak of war he had his command under Cornwallis, and afterwards under St. Vincent. He was afterwards in command in the Tagus, the Mediterranean, and the Channel, and died at Plymouth on February 23, 1812.

¹ The frigate had been described as the *Pensée*. See No. 20 for Captain Mansfield's report of the capture. Captain Ferrier's account is omitted here.

tenth in the Diamond, and has removed to the Venerable.

I have the honour to be, &c.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 30

Ships and vessels detained by his Majesty's squadron under command of the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue and Commander-in-Chief, &c. May 20-June 24, 1803. [A précis of the table.]

[The Doris took five French brigs and a ship of 200 tons, and three Dutch galliots and a brig; the Nemesis, one French schooner, and the Aigle, three French brigs, two ships, and a schooner, which were all sent into Plymouth; the Diamond, a Dutch ship, and two *chasse-marées*, which were sent into Portland. The Minotaur took two French ships and a brig, and three Dutch ships and a brig; the Thunderer, one French and one Spanish ship, and a Prussian brig; the Sceptre and Thunderer, a Danish brig; the Acasta four Dutch ships, four brigs, and three galliots, two with the assistance of the Doris; the Albion, one French ship and a brig; and the Atalante two French brigs. All these were sent into Plymouth.]

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 31

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 16th June, 1803.

Sir,—I gave the lieutenant of the Dryad his orders when it cleared up for half an hour yesterday evening, and he was to proceed to Spithead as

soon as he had received Captain Searle on board ; but it came on very thick again immediately afterwards, and has continued so ever since, that I apprehend he has not yet been able to part company.

Captain Wood, of the *Acasta*, who separated in the fog on Monday, returned yesterday, and informs me he had seen a French frigate, but the copper on his ship's bottom being very foul, he could not come near her.

Some small vessels of a suspicious kind have also been seen. I imagine the French vessels are all endeavouring to keep to the westward of us, to give notice to their ships, expected from the West Indies, of our situation.

The *Acasta* I have sent inshore to join Rear-Admiral Campbell, and the *Naiad* to watch the Passage du Raz. I believe no ships have got out of Brest since we have been here, nor do I believe any have got in, although it has been so reported, probably to put us off our guard. A frigate was said to be at Bordeaux some time since, and probably the ship seen by the *Acasta*.

I shall send the *Thunderer*, or one of the fastest sailing ships, to look out to the westward of the squadron. I enclose a copy of the last account Captain d'Auvergne¹ sent me by the *Hazard*—it

¹ For an account of the very romantic history of Captain Philip d'Auvergne, Prince de Bouillon (commonly styled the Duc de Bouillon in England), see Forneron, '*Le Dernier Prince de Bouillon*;' Hettier, '*Relations de la Normandie et de la Bretagne avec les îles de la Manche pendant l'Emigration*;' De Contades, '*Emigrés et Chouans*;' and a curious English pamphlet, '*A Brief Exposition of the Rights, Titles, and Claims of Philip d'Auvergne, &c.*' He was the son of a simple gentleman of Jersey, Charles d'Auvergne, and of his wife, Elizabeth Le Geyt, and was born in 1754. Hettier says that he dreamed as a boy of becoming an admiral, and that, after serving in the royal yacht, he was midshipman of the *Flora*, and later was in the *Racehorse*, Captain Phipps, at Spitzbergen, engaged in scientific

was the middle of the month—but nothing has been seen in Brest road except the ships mentioned in Rear-Admiral Campbell's account, which I transmitted for their Lordships' information. The Dragon, I understand, is at sea, but the weather has been so thick she has not been able to join me yet.

Captain Domett's commission, which came out in the Naiad after he joined me yesterday, has been given him.

The Pickle, schooner, having returned, I have sent her to Sir Edward Pellew, as their Lordships appear desirous that he should have some small vessels with him.

observations. After serving on the American coast under Howe, he was captured as a lieutenant on the coast of France, and remained a prisoner of war until 1780. At this period Godefroy Charles Henry de La Tour d'Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon and Vicomte de Turenne, whose eldest son was ill and his second son dead, was seeking an heir. The young prisoner was presented to him by M. de Sartine, Minister of Marine, and when the Abbé Coyer had sought, and discovered in the thirteenth century, after a search covering several years, the common ancestry of the old noble and the naval officer, the latter was adopted and charged with the inheritance of the famous house which bore the honours of the great Turenne. The act of adoption was signed in 1786 ('London Gazette,' January 1787), the young officer having meanwhile served at the Cape of Good Hope and in the West Indies. He was proclaimed as *prince héritier* with great ceremony, but when the old noble was dead, endeavouring, in 1802, to justify his title and possession in Paris, D'Auvergne was illegally arrested with great indignity on the suspicion or pretence that he was a spy ('Annual Register,' 1803, p. 253). The real cause was probably the succour he had given to the *émigrés* during his residence in Jersey and the service he had rendered with the flotilla at the Channel Islands. He was released, and returned to the Islands, living in close communication with Royalist exiles, and was appointed to the Severn (44), August 1803, being ordered to place himself under the orders of Sir James Saumarez at Jersey on November 14. In 1805 he became Rear-Admiral of the Blue, in July 1810 Vice-Admiral, and in November 1813 Vice-Admiral of the White. Disappointed in his high hopes, he died obscurely in an hotel in London, September 18, 1816, and was buried at St. Margaret's, Westminster.

The *Atalante* I mentioned to have sent out three days ago, and the *Aigle* I have directed him to keep with him.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

[Captain Bedford (Thunderer) received his orders on the same day to proceed to the westward, returning every two or three days near enough to be recalled. Instructions for the same service were conveyed by the *Pickle* (which then proceeded to Ferrol) to Captain Hamond (Plantagenet), but he was to cruise first a week longer off Lorient to watch the French line-of-battle ship there. Captain Paget (*Endymion*) was ordered to cruise for two months between lat. 47° and 50° N., and long. 20° and 25° W., for the protection of trade and annoyance of the enemy, and Captain Maitland (*Boadicea*) was ordered to Bordeaux to watch the French frigate at that port.]

INCLOSURE

Extract from Captain d'Auvergne's Letter,
5th June, 1803.

'By the accounts reached me from Brest, not later than the middle of May, twenty out of the twenty-one line-of-battle ships ordered were forward in their armament. The levies of seamen on the neighbouring coast of Normandy are retained for the flat boats and small vessels arming at Cherbourg. Whether this is a sign that Brest is completed or no I have not yet learnt, but rather surmise they are retained to make a show in support of the Consul's favourite project of preparation for invasion. The ships at Brest are very com-

pletely stored for six months, cables excepted, of which for the narrow seas they would be rather short.'

No. 32

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Cape Ortegal, 17th June, 1803.

Sir,—From the day we left your flag until we made Cape de Peñas we saw no ship of any nation, and the wind, with very bad weather, hanging constantly at S.W. and W.S.W. we could fetch no further to the westward until yesterday, the 16th, we rounded Cape Ortegal, the Aigle in company, Captain Wolfe having joined me in the evening of the 13th. I then brought the squadron to, in sight of Cape Prior, so as not to be known, and sent the Aigle to look into Ferrol at night. I bore down to meet her, and at 4 A.M. this morning, the 17th, she joined me with the enclosed report. I have thought it right to despatch her to you without loss of time, as it is possible the two ships may push for Brest, but by the course they steered, and from condemning one ship (probably) for the purpose of completing the crews and stores of the others, I conjecture they are bound to the southward—the Cape or East Indies was mentioned by the American ship spoken by Captain Wolfe. All this, however, is conjecture.

I shall follow their track for forty-eight hours with the Mars, and act from any information I may pick up on my route; but not gaining any in that time I shall return to Capes Ortegal and Prior, to pick up the Spartiate, who had gone off in chase and has no other rendezvous. I shall then proceed

off Rochefort, agreeably to your orders to that effect.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE

*CAPTAIN GEORGE WOLFE TO SIR EDWARD
PELLEW*

L'Aigle, between 16th and 17th June, 1803.

Intelligence

Left at Ferrol two Dutch sail of the line, one frigate, and one sloop, unmoored, and took in pilots the day before (Wednesday), and expected to put to sea this afternoon, reported to be bound to the East Indies. One Dutch ship of the line found to be unfit for service and condemned; sails bent, but not unmoored.¹ Reported also that the two Admirals were ordered to Holland, and they struck their flags some days since. They board every vessel which arrives, and appeared very anxious after information. The master of this brig saw fourteen Spanish sail of the line in the inner harbour, all without their lower masts and bowsprits.

No. 33

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 18th June, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the Boadicea and Endymion joined me on the

¹ The ship referred to was the Oldenbarneveldt.

16th instant, and that I have sent the former off Bordeaux to watch a French frigate, reported to me to be there ready to put to sea.¹ The *Endymion* immediately proceeded agreeably to their Lordships' directions.

The *Minotaur* joined me from Plymouth yesterday. I have sent her inshore to Rear-Admiral Campbell. At noon this day the *Dragon* joined.

I have sent the *Sceptre* to Cawsand Bay to complete her stores and provisions and to wait for further orders.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 34

CAPTAIN AYLMER TO CORNWALLIS

Dragon, at Sea, 18th June, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour of acquainting you that I early this morning fell in with and captured, in company with his Majesty's ship *Endymion*, the National corvette *la Colombe*, copper-bottomed, pierced for sixteen guns, and had on board sixty-five men, forty days from Martinique, bound to Brest, and commanded by Citoyen Caro, lieutenant de vaisseau.²

I have the honour to be, &c.,

J. AYLMER.

¹ On June 23rd the *Sirius* was ordered to join the *Boadicea* in this duty, and the *Diamond* was ordered to relieve the *Boadicea* off Lorient on July 7th.

² Troude (*Batailles Navales*) says the *Colombe* was a 12-gun corvette, but had disembarked guns at San Domingo.

No. 35

ADMIRALTY TO CORNWALLIS

[Most secret]

*By the Commissioners for executing the Office of
Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.*

The Right Honourable Lord Hobart, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, having by his letter of yesterday's date acquainted us that information had been received that the Batavian Republic has been called upon by the French Government to furnish a considerable number of boats and vessels, with a view to the execution of a plan of invasion against this country, and signified to us his Majesty's pleasure that instructions should forthwith be given for the purpose of bringing into port all hoys and fishing boats belonging to the French and Batavian Republics, or to the citizens of either, and to detain the crews of such vessels until further orders; you are, in pursuance of his Majesty's pleasure signified to us as above mentioned, hereby required and directed to give immediate orders to the captains and commanders of his Majesty's ships and vessels under your command to seize and bring into port all French and Batavian fishing boats, hoys, and vessels of every description employed in the fisheries, they may happen to fall in with, and to detain their crews until further order.

Given under our hands, the 18th day of June,
1803.

ST. VINCENT.
P. STEPHENS.
T. TROUBRIDGE.

[Identical orders were given to Lord Keith at the Nore, Sir James Saumarez at Guernsey, Admiral Montagu at Portsmouth, and Sir John Colpoys at Plymouth.]

No. 36

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Prince of Wales, Portsmouth, 20th June, 1803.

Sir,—In obedience to their Lordships' letter of the 18th instant, I repaired here, have hoisted my flag on board the Prince of Wales, and shall put their further orders in execution without a moment's delay.

I am, &c.,
ROBT. CALDER.¹

No. 37

CAMPBELL TO CORNWALLIS

Culloden, at Sea, 20th June, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst., by the *Acasta*, in which you mention that it appears to you very unlikely that

¹ Sir Robert Calder was captain of the fleet at the battle of St. Vincent, and brought home the dispatches. It has been asserted, though without evidence, that he procured the omission of Nelson's name. He became a rear-admiral in February 1799, and in February 1801, when the French slipped into the Mediterranean, sought them, under a mistaken idea, in the West Indies. With his flag in the Prince of Wales, he joined Cornwallis off Brest in 1803. He was promoted to vice-admiral in April 1804, and in February 1805 was detached off Ferrol. When cruising and looking out to the westward under special orders, he encountered the combined fleets of France and Spain returning from the West Indies, he fought the inconclusive action of July 22, for which he was tried by court-martial and reprimanded.

they (the French) should in all this time have fitted no ships for sea, and that you never understood that any number could be kept out of sight, even with their topmasts struck, which I have likewise understood ; but the very unfavourable state of the wind and tide, as I explained to you in my letter of the 11th inst., the day we reconnoitred, rendered a more correct observance of the enemy's squadron impossible. And I am very sorry to add that the weather has been such, owing to fog, &c., that we have not been able to look in since Sunday, the 12th inst., when the Doris reported the enemy to be in the same state as before, and which I mentioned in my letter to you of the 14th.

On the 19th Captain Pearson made me the signal No. 19 interrogatory, to reconnoitre, agreeably to a memorandum I have issued. The weather being then rather clear I affirmed it, but it appearing likely to come on thick again, I recalled Captain Pearson, which I was very glad of, as it has been very foggy ever since ; and it would have been impossible for him to have reconnoitred had he gone in.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

No. 38

CAMPBELL TO CORNWALLIS

Culloden, at Sea, 21st June, 1803.

Sir,—I take the opportunity of writing by the *Acasta* to acquaint you that the squadron has reconnoitred the enemy's force in Brest, and the *Doris* has just made the signal to me that it consists of four ships of the line and five frigates.

The *Russell* has made the signal of four sail of the line and three frigates.

The *Acasta* makes the signal for four sail of the line and four frigates.

The *Minotaur* has made the signal, three sail of the line and four frigates.

Inclosed I beg leave to transmit a report of the enemy's ships as reconnoitred by his Majesty's ship *Culloden*.

In your letter of the 15th inst. you ordered me to send the *Doris* to you as soon as a favourable opportunity had offered of looking into Brest, but you having recalled the *Acasta* I shall retain the *Doris* till I receive your further orders, or till you call her off by signal, which I trust will meet with your approbation.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

INCLOSURE A

State of French ships and vessels in Brest Road when reconnoitred by his Majesty's ship Acasta at 3 p.m., the 21st June, 1803.

Four ships of the line of two decks, with sails bent, one of them bearing a flag at the mizen.

Three frigates, one of them rigged, two stripped.

Two small ship-corvettes close inshore.

Two men-of-war brigs.

Two gun brigs.

Two large ships with poops like *Indiamen* or frigates armed *en flûte*.

One large merchant ship, Spanish colours.

Several small craft, such as schooners, sloops, and *chasse-marées*.

Captain Wood of the *Acasta* to Admiral Cornwallis.

INCLOSURE B

Report of the French squadron at Brest, as reconnoitred by his Majesty's ship Culloden, when she had the following bearings on, viz. :

Pointe de Toulinguet	. S.W.
Camaret Bay	. S.E. by S.
Pointe de Portzic	. E. by N.
Bertheaume Fort	. N.W. by N.
Batterie de Léon	. N.E. by E.
St. Matthew's Point	. N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.

Four ships of the line with topgallant yards across. One with no sails bent, and one bearing a Rear-Admiral's flag.

Three frigates. Two ready, with topgallant yards across, and one (a large frigate) with topmasts down and a lighter alongside.

Three brigs ready for sea.

Two corvettes, with a great number of ketches, gunboats, &c., &c.

GEO. CAMPBELL.

No. 39

CAFFARELLI TO DECRÈS¹

Brest, 30 prairial, an XI (19th June, 1803).

Ce n'est pas les ouvriers qui manqueront, ce seront les matières, et je suis à la veille de ne pouvoir avancer les travaux, faute de courbes et de bois courbés. Je me réfère à mes lettres où je disais que je n'avais pas de pièces de tour pour le Cassard, point de courbes pour le Vengeur, point de membrures pour les radoubs. Que résultera-t-il de cette accumulation ?

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 168.

une surcharge d'ouvriers qu'on ne saura comment employer.

Les conscrits vont arriver, et je suis effrayé d'avance du grand nombre d'hommes dont l'utilité sera bien incertaine. Les marins manquent pour les armements ; tous ont été appelés, et afin d'obtenir tout le résultat des levées en général les agents de l'inscription maritime ont établi des garnisaires, requis la gendarmerie pour la recherche des fuyards et des déserteurs ; j'ai promis six francs par homme qui serait ramené. J'ai écrit au préfet du Finistère pour qu'il fit concourir l'autorité des maires à l'exécution des mesures. Tous mes moyens ont été épuisés.¹

No. 40

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 22nd June, 1803.

Sir [after acknowledging orders, &c.],—I have also received a copy of the paper for my information relative to the preparations of the enemy at St. Malo, and I have their Lordships' order, dated the 16th instant, directing me not to carry or send any ships or vessels, which I may take as prize, into the ports of Portugal, except compelled so to do by stress of weather, or to use any of the said ports as naval stations, for the purpose of carrying on from thence hostilities against his Majesty's enemies, which you

¹ At about this time Caffarelli reported to Decrès the great vigilance of the English. The *Festin* left Brest at daybreak on June 21st, but had not gone more than a league into the Iroise passage when she sighted two British frigates. These gave chase, and one pursued her to the mouth of the Goulet. 'The nights being very short it is difficult to escape the vigilance of the cruisers.' He described the division of the squadron into the inshore and main body.

will please acquaint their Lordships I shall attend to accordingly.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 41

CAMPBELL TO CORNWALLIS

His Majesty's ship Culloden, 25th June, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you the Doris, yesterday afternoon, captured inshore a small French privateer of twenty-four tons, called la Pélagie, mounting four guns, and having on board thirty-seven men, from Nantes, on a cruise, and had taken nothing.

She came through the Passage du Raz, and intended to have gone through the Passage du Four into the Channel. Captain Pearson has scuttled her by my directions.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
GEO. CAMPBELL.

No. 42

SIR E. NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

[Secret]

Admiralty Office, 25th June, 1803.

Sir,—My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received information that the division of Rear-Admiral Bedout,¹ consisting of the ships named

¹ Rear-Admiral Jacques Bedout appears to have gone to sea in the merchant marine. As a *lieutenant de frégate* he served in the war from 1778 to 1782. As a captain he distinguished himself on several occasions, and particularly by his conduct in command of the *Tigre* on June 23, 1795, in the engagement off the Ile de Groix, where he was wounded, and compelled by superior

in the margin,¹ was to sail from San Domingo about the 20th of last month, intending to proceed into the Mediterranean, their Lordships have judged it expedient that a squadron of his Majesty's ships should be detached to endeavour to intercept them; and I have received their Lordships' commands to signify their direction to you, as soon as the ships named in the margin² shall have joined you from Plymouth, to order Rear-Admiral Campbell to shift his flag to the first mentioned ship, and proceed with them and the Conqueror off of Cape St. Vincent, and take such station as he may judge to be most likely to afford him an opportunity of intercepting the said French ships on their making the Cape (which they will probably attempt to do before they proceed into the Mediterranean), and, on falling in with them, to use his best endeavours to take or destroy them.

In case the French Admiral should have been apprised of the commencement of hostilities between the two countries, it is not improbable that he may

force to haul down his flag. He was captain of the *Indomptable*, Vice-Admiral Morard de Galles, carrying the staff of Hoche, which sailed out of Brest on December 16, 1796, and was the only captain of the squadron not abused by Wolfe Tone for want of seamanship. He said, however, to Tone that he would rather stand three engagements than again pass through the Raz de Sein at night. Bedout was commodore of the squadron of seven line-of-battle ships, one frigate, and two small vessels, which returned disconcerted to Brest on January 1, 1797. He was promoted to rear-admiral after the Peace of Amiens, and went to the West Indies. The French arms suffered severe reverses in San Domingo, and vast numbers of men died of yellow fever. Villaret-Joyeuse was recalled in April 1803, and Latouche-Tréville, who succeeded, soon fell ill and returned. As will appear later on, Bedout reached Corunna with his ships in safety. He fell ill there and was succeeded by Gourdon. He became a commander of the Legion of Honour, with the Cross of St. Louis, at the close of the war.

¹ *Argonaute*, *Fougueux*, *Redoutable*, *Héros*.

² *Canopus*, *Malta*, *Sceptre*.

determine to make the coast of Barbary rather than Cape St. Vincent, and proceed along shore into the Mediterranean. You are therefore to direct the Rear-Admiral to be attentive to this circumstance, and to govern himself by any intelligence he may receive, either in continuing off Cape St. Vincent, or in proceeding to the coast of Barbary, as, according to circumstances that may arise, may be most likely to enable him to fall in with the enemy.

If, after cruising off Cape St. Vincent or elsewhere, in execution of his orders, till the 20th of next month, the Rear-Admiral should not fall in with the said French ships, nor receive any information respecting them that may be of a nature to justify his continuing any longer on that station, you are to direct him to proceed in the *Canopus* into the Mediterranean and join Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson at Gibraltar, or wherever else he may learn his Lordship may be ; and, on falling in with him, follow his orders for his further proceedings, sending the *Sceptre* to the East Indies, agreeably to the inclosed order to her commander, and the rest of the force under his orders to rejoin you on such rendezvous as you may appoint.¹

In order that the Rear-Admiral may be better enabled to execute the service entrusted to his care, you are to order a frigate and a cutter to accompany him,² directing him to employ the latter, or the former, if he should judge it necessary, in obtaining intelligence from Gibraltar, for which purpose, if the wind should happen to be westerly, he is to order the commander of the frigate or cutter to keep without Cape Spartel, and to send an officer to Tangier to learn from his Majesty's Consul there whether the French squadron above

¹ The appointed rendezvous was off Ushant.

² The *Doris* and *Fox* were detached for the purpose.

mentioned shall have passed the Straits, and to desire his assistance in forwarding his dispatches to Gibraltar, with a view to the obtaining the like information, and wait his return, unless he shall receive such information from his Majesty's Consul as may be sufficient to satisfy him in respect to the French squadron.

In case the Rear-Admiral, on his arrival on his station, should learn that the French squadron has arrived at Cadiz, he is to proceed off of that port and remain there till further order, using his best endeavours to prevent its putting to sea; or, in the event of its sailing, to endeavour to intercept it, sending information thereof to his Majesty's Minister at Lisbon, through the channel of Governor O'Connell, at Faro, in order to its being transmitted to their Lordships as speedily as possible; and to avail himself of any other opportunity that may offer of furnishing their Lordships with that and any other information he may be able to collect which may be worthy of their knowledge.

In the event of his remaining off Cadiz, he is to consider of the plan most advisable to be adopted for the purpose of obtaining refreshments for his squadron, and to lose no opportunity that may present itself for so doing, either from Gibraltar or elsewhere, for which purpose he is at liberty to make use of any transport or other vessel of that description which may happen to be at Gibraltar, and may not interfere with any other more material service; but that he is not to detach either of the line-of-battle ships for the purpose of obtaining such refreshments or supplies, unless he be thoroughly satisfied that he can do so without exposing the rest of his squadron during her absence to too much risk.

I send inclosed the extracts of information which have induced their Lordships to adopt the measure which you are now directed to take, and if any further intelligence shall hereafter be received it will be communicated to you without delay.

I have their Lordships' further commands to acquaint you that a convoy is now collecting at Spithead for the Mediterranean, which will probably sail from thence in about a week from this time; and if, on its approaching the Straits, the Rear-Admiral should find it necessary, from the preparations made by the enemy, to afford it any protection, he is to be directed so to do, as far as may be possible consistently with the orders he is under; and if, after his separating from his squadron, he should find it at Gibraltar on his arrival there, he is to accompany it on its passage up the Mediterranean to such distance as the circumstances may render necessary, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

[The orders herein given were issued to Rear-Admiral Campbell from on board the Dreadnought, off Ushant, 29th June, 1803. His report of his proceedings will be found in No. 78. He was relieved inshore by Collingwood. See Nos. 47 and 50.]

No. 43

CAPTAIN PAGET TO CORNWALLIS

Endymion, at Sea, 25th June, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that this morning, in lat. $47^{\circ} 10'$ N. and long. 20° W., the Endymion fell in with, and captured after a

chase of eight hours, la Bacchante, French corvette, of eighteen 12-pounders, commanded by Lieutenant de Vaisseau Kerimel, and having on board 200 men. La Bacchante is a remarkably fine ship, of large dimensions, quite new, and sails very fast. She was on her return to Brest, having been sent from thence three months ago with dispatches for San Domingo. The captain persisted so long in his endeavours to escape that the Endymion's bow guns killed her second captain and seven men, and wounded nine others. I am happy to add, her fire did us no harm.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CHARLES PAGET.¹

No. 44

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN FLEEMING

[From time to time Cornwallis was called upon to account for his ships and vessels not being upon what were officially considered their proper stations. The Egyptienne was spoken in 44° N. lat. and 14° W. long., and the Admiralty remarked on the fact. Cornwallis explained that having no small ships with him, he had been obliged to send orders by her, and on August 9 he forwarded a copy of this order to Captain Fleeming to account for her being to the southward.²]

By the Honourable William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

You are hereby required and directed to proceed in the ship you command off Port Lorient, and deliver the orders you will herewith receive to

¹ Captain (afterwards Vice-Admiral Sir Charles) Paget (1778-1839) had commanded, from October 1798 to April 1801, the Brilliant in the Channel, and the Hydra in the Channel and Mediterranean. He commissioned the Endymion frigate on March 30, 1803, and for the next two years was cruising in the Channel, the Bay of Biscay, and on the coasts of Spain and Portugal.

² See No. 89 in relation to the separation of the ships, p. 110.

the captain of his Majesty's ship *Plantagenet*, and the other orders, according to their directions, to the several commanders of the ships of the squadron you may fall in with in the route you are hereby directed to take, but you are not to wait more than two or three days if you should not immediately meet with them; first off Lorient, then Rochefort and Bordeaux, and afterwards to Sir Edward Pellew, cruising off Ferrol, unless you should sooner fall in with him, upon his having left that station, or, upon your arrival off that port, you should receive certain information of his having so done. You are then to stretch to the northward across the Bay, until you are nearly in the stream of the Channel, and in that direction you are to make your westing from twenty to twenty-four degrees, and latitude from forty-eight to fifty North, and, continuing on that station, most diligently look out for and afford protection to the homeward bound trade; continuing upon that service for the space of two months from your arrival upon that station.

Having performed the whole of the service hereby directed, you are to return and join me off Ushant, or wherever you may learn I am at the time with the squadron.

Should you fall in with his Majesty's ship *Endymion*, you are to deliver to her commander the order you will receive herewith directed to him. The *Endymion* is cruising nearly in the same latitude and longitude.¹

Given, &c., Dreadnought, off Ushant, June 26, 1803.

W. CORNWALLIS.

[On the night of June 27-28 the gunboat *Venteux* (Lieutenant Montfort), armed with four long 18-

¹ The order to the *Endymion* was to cruise between that station and the Western Islands for the protection of trade.

pounders and six 36-pound carronades, and having 82 men on board, was attacked at her anchorage in the Ile de Batz roads by the boats of the Loire, commanded by Lieutenants Temple and Bowen, and, after a desperate struggle, in which about eighteen of the French officers and men were killed and wounded, was cut out and taken to Plymouth, where she arrived on July 2nd. Eight Englishmen were wounded. The *Venteux* was stationed at the Ile de Batz to guard the coast and regulate the convoys bound to Brest. Our reports say that the fighting lasted an hour and a half, and that the capture was made under a heavy fire from the shore by two of the Loire's boats, and before the third could come up. Captain Maitland, in reporting the capture to Sir John Colpoys, spoke of it 'as one of those brilliant exploits which add lustre to the British arms, of which, though so many instances occurred during the late war, no one has before been happy enough to have thrown in his way during the present.' Caffarelli's information from Roscoff says that the attack began at one o'clock in the morning, and that at 1.45 A.M. the gunboat was carried from her anchorage. He adds: 'The coast batteries did not fire on the boats, and it appears that so far we cannot count much on their help.'¹ It was a constant complaint with the Prefect that the shore defences were in a wretched state.]

No. 45

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 28th June, 1803.

Sir,—I have to request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 173. See No. 49.

that his Majesty's ship the *Egyptienne* joined me from Portsmouth the 26th instant. Having no small vessel with the squadron, I sent her with orders to the different ships, and afterwards to cruise as pointed out by their Lordships.

Agreeably to their Lordships' direction, I have ordered the flag officers, captains, and commanders of his Majesty's squadron under my command to seize and send into port all hoys, fishing-boats, and vessels of every description they may be able to meet with belonging to the fisheries of the French and Batavian Republics, and detain their crews until further orders.

The *Albion* left me, according to their Lordships' direction, for Cawsand Bay on the 22nd in the evening; at the same time the *Ardent* separated in chase of a strange sail, which she made the signal of being suspicious. I have not since seen that ship.

The *Malta*, from Plymouth, joined the squadron yesterday. I have sent the *Conqueror* inshore off Brest to Rear-Admiral Campbell, and shall immediately send the *Russell* to Cawsand Bay to complete, and remain there for their Lordships' further orders.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 46

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ships and vessels captured and detained by his Majesty's squadron under the command of the Honourable William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue and Commander-in-Chief, &c., &c., between the 1st and 30th June, 1803. (In addition to the last account. A précis of the table.)

[The *Naiad* and the *Impatient* took one Dutch sloop and an English ship of Glasgow (*Demerara*

to Rotterdam); the Sirius, a French ship; the Dragon and the Endymion, a French brig; and the Naiad, a French brig, which were all sent into Plymouth. The Doris took a French lugger, scuttled by order of Rear-Admiral Campbell, and a French sloop, sent into Plymouth.]

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 47

*CORNWALLIS TO REAR-ADMIRAL
COLLINGWOOD*¹

[An order in identical terms with that issued to Admiral Campbell on June 9 (No. 26) to assume command of the inshore squadron, the ships here named in the margin being the Venerable, Minotaur, Culloden, Naiad, and Aigle. Given on board the Dreadnought, off Ushant, June 30, 1803.]

No. 48

*CAFFARELLI TO DECRÈS*²

Brest, 11 messidor, an XI (30th June, 1803).

Nos côtes sont armées, il est vrai, mais sans troupes pour les défendre, ou leur nombre est si petit

¹ Collingwood, the lifelong friend of Nelson, to whom fell the command upon his death at Trafalgar, had perhaps a unique experience of the work of blockading. In the Excellent he was off Toulon in 1795-6. After his memorable share in the victory of St. Vincent he was for two years with Jervis blockading Cadiz. From 1800 to the Peace of Amiens in the following year he was engaged in the Channel blockade. It is said that when he joined Cornwallis in 1803 the latter exclaimed: 'Here comes Collingwood, the last to leave and the first to join me.' He was actively employed up to his death in 1810, his life, as he wrote, having been a continued service at sea.

² *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 181.

qu'elles le sont mal. Le général commandant dans le Finistère réclame qu'on lui envoie au moins 2000 hommes. J'en ai demandé au moins 1000 encore, car nos armements sont incomplets, ainsi que nos détachements de côte.

Notre division de quatre vaisseaux ne peut mettre dehors. Sa présence au Goulet attirerait l'armée anglaise, et le moindre accident aux vaisseaux entraînerait la perte infaillible de ceux qui seraient maltraités dans un combat. Ainsi l'impuissance de faire de grands efforts permet à nos ennemis de tenter toutes les petites entreprises qu'ils peuvent ; ce n'est qu'avec méfiance et circonspection que nos bâtiments peuvent naviguer.

Cet état est affligeant, citoyen ministre

No. 49

*CAFFARELLI TO DECRÈS*¹

Brest, 13 messidor, an XI (July 2, 1803).

Les rapports disent qu'à l'île de Batz, près Morlaix, il y a 70 soldats, 7 artilleurs ; que les canons sont montés sur des affûts pourris ; que cette troupe ne sait pas servir les canons ; que la passe de l'est du mouillage a des canons d'un trop petit calibre. Aussi, quand le *Venteux* a été enlevé à l'abordage, les batteries n'ont-elles pas tiré sur les péniches anglaises. Ce n'est que deux heures après (vers les quatre heures du matin du 9), et la chaloupe canonnière le *Venteux* était enlevée à 1 h. $\frac{3}{4}$.

Les rapports des autres points de la côte annoncent que les batteries sont mal pourvues, mal équipées, et qu'il n'y a pas d'hommes pour les défendre. Per-

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 181.

ros et les Sept-Iles sont un point important, et ils ne sont pas armés.

Cet état fait pitié, citoyen ministre, et le nombre des croiseurs anglais sur toute la côte est si grand que je ne serais pas surpris qu'ils en clouassent les canons, qu'ils prissent momentanément quelque poste, sans qu'on pût s'y opposer.

Je ne puis concevoir l'état de délaissement où est cette côte ; la navigation et sa défense sont absolument impossibles ; et je crains de n'avoir à vous annoncer que des nouvelles fâcheuses.

No. 50

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 3rd July, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the Sceptre and Fox, cutter, joined me the 29th of last month at eleven o'clock in the morning, and the Canopus at half-past five the same evening. That ship, with the Malta, Sceptre, and Fox, cutter, stood immediately in to join Rear-Admiral Campbell, which they did about nine o'clock ; the Conqueror was inshore with the Rear-Admiral, and in the orders which were sent to him in consequence of their Lordships' directions, signified to me in your letter dated the 25th, the Doris, which has been stationed inshore, was ordered to accompany him. Captain Pearson has been directed to leave the warrant officers who are to attend the trial to be sent in by the Aigle.

As there are some ships in Brest Road reported to be ready for sea, I have directed Rear-Admiral Collingwood for the present to watch them with

three ships of the line and two frigates, continuing to cruise myself with the remainder off Ushant. The Thunderer and Plantagenet are watching Lorient, and Sir Edward Pellew is probably now before Rochefort. I should therefore hope there is a fair prospect of intercepting any of the French ships upon their return, if they should attempt to get into any of those ports. I shall endeavour to send another two-deck ship off Lorient should the wind come to the westward.

The Ardent rejoined me yesterday. Captain Winthrop reports the ship he chased the evening of the 22nd of last month was a Swedish frigate, and that he did not speak her until ten o'clock the day after, and that he has been ever since endeavouring to regain his station.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 51

CORNWALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 5th July, 1803.

Sir,—I received your letter by the Aigle. I recollect the pilot, when he went on shore two years ago from the *Immortalité*, was some days longer than was expected. I hope, however, he is returned. The greatest care should be taken to keep it secret. You will be pleased to send any information you may be able to collect by the *Diamond*, and detain that ship until you have something to send.

I have wished very much to have a small vessel to send to you, knowing the advantage she would be of, so situated ; but the only vessels of that kind which have been sent out here have had other service allotted them.

Captain Dacres should have sent a demand for the stores he wanted.

There were reported in Brest Road by Rear-Admiral Campbell, when he first took the station off that port, besides the line-of-battle ships, two frigates ready for sea, two ships with poops like transports, and one under Spanish colours, as well as brigs and other small craft. But I think it likely they change them. Two frigates were said to be working about the mouth of the harbour occasionally.

The preventing anything getting into the port is also as necessary a part of the service as any. I hope not to be obliged to detain you there any length of time.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 52

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 5th July, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Hamon,¹ the French pilot who went into Brest harbour from the *Immortalité* to reconnoitre the state of their fleet when I was off Brest two years ago, volunteered the same service again for the like purpose from the inshore ships, and his report sent to me by Rear-Admiral Collingwood is inclosed for their Lordships' information. He was absent four days, and was obliged at last to row himself off in a boat he took from the shore, not having been able to get to the boat sent for him every evening.

The merit of this daring man seems to be very

¹ Sometimes called Hanan or Hammond.

great, and I have no doubt will be so considered by their Lordships.¹

The Aigle left me early yesterday morning for Plymouth.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 4th July, 1803.

Sir,—Mr. Hamon, the person who was mentioned to you by Rear-Admiral Campbell, after experiencing some difficulties from having missed the boats that were sent for him, yesterday took a small boat from Brest, and came off to-day by himself; the intelligence he brings is important, and his account clear and distinct. He says:

In the outer road of Brest is the Foudroyant, Admiral Lacrosse [?], and three other ships of the line, their names unknown, three large frigates, four corvettes and two French brigs; in one of the corvettes is a commodore, expected to sail soon. In the inner road of Brest is Admiral Bouvrie [*sic*] and fifteen ships of the line, two of them in a forward state of equipment, of which the Tyrannicide is one. There are besides five frigates, two of which are fitting, and a Dutch brig of war. The Invincible is in dock, and the Occident, a new first-rate, is without masts. The ships in the outer road, he understood, were manned, but no activity apparent in fitting those in the inner port.²

¹ Hamon was ordered by the Admiralty to receive 50*l.* for his services.

² Hamon's information was approximately correct in regard to the number of ships of the line, but his names of ships are not all accurate, and those of the Admirals are wrong. For the exact state of the ships in Brest at this period see Caffarelli's

In the outer road are five gunboats complete.

In the inner port seven are fitting, and four or five more building ; and the preparation of those gunboats occupies the principal attention. The gunboats have a 36-pounder in the bow and small cohorns mounted on the gunwale ; the deck opens in the middle and stands up on each side, forming a barricade, and opening the whole space for the men below to come up. He reckons that each will carry about 150 men ; they are rigged with two lug-sails, and a mizen like a dogger's ; they draw about four feet of water, for when they exercise (which is every day) they run on the beach, and the soldiers go on shore from them about breast high in water.

From what he could learn, as well as from his observations, there were very few troops in Brest, and the neighbouring batteries have merely a guard in them.

He dined one day at the village of Saint-Pierre, where a strong work is that covers Brest, and very few soldiers were to be seen at or near it.

In the night he met a patrol which consisted of *one* soldier and some armed countrymen, from which circumstances he concluded that the troops were removed to other service.

The general conversation at Brest was the invasion of England, and the work of the artificers seemed to be principally confined to the gunboats.

The Naiad's boats this morning took two out of several fishing boats that were on their way to Brest for provisions ; from one of them he learnt that a National schooner from Rochefort, laden with timber and bound to Brest, was at the Saints repairing some damage she has sustained. I have ordered him

report to Decrès (No. 19), and Decrès' later instructions to Caffarelli (No. 102).

down to her, and hope he will succeed in bringing her out.

I stated to you, sir, in my former letter the great use a cutter or two would be here in intercepting the small vessels coasting, which is with difficulty done by the frigates only, particularly in the foggy weather which we constantly have.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,
CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

P.S.—I have sent Hamon, the pilot, to answer any questions you may please to ask him.

No. 53

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Canopus, at Sea, 29th November, 1803.²

Sir,—I feel it my duty to request you will lay before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the following statement of an enterprising service performed by Mr. J. Hamon, French pilot, of the Culloden, during the time my flag was flying on board her, with the detachment of the Channel Squadron placed under my orders by the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis, for the purpose of watching the port of Brest. Admiral Cornwallis having acquainted me that he had information the French had twenty out of twenty-one sail of the line nearly ready for sea at Brest, and my reconnoitring—with the following bearings, viz. Pte. de Toulanguet, S.W. ; Camaret Bay, S.E. by S. ; Pte. de Portzic, E. by N. ; Bertheaume Fort, N.W. by N. ; Batterie de Léon,

¹ The Pickle schooner joined the inshore squadron on July 7th.

² Given in this place because of its retrospective reference to the service of Hamon in June and July.

N.E. by E. ; St. Matthew's Point, N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N. ; and the town of Brest open—being only four sail of the line, three frigates, and five corvettes, &c., of course made me very anxious to obtain the best possible information on that subject. Mr. Hamon undertook to go secretly into Brest, and gain information of the enemy's force there, and return again to me in three days. Having arranged everything relating to his being landed and brought off again, I gave the execution of so doing to Captain Pearson, of his Majesty's ship *Doris*, who, on the night of the 28th June last, succeeded in setting him on shore unobserved in Bertheaume Bay, the French pilot of the *Doris* accompanying the officer of that ship, who put Mr. Hamon on shore for the purpose of knowing where to go on the third night to bring him off again. The orders I received the next day from Admiral Cornwallis to shift my flag to the *Canopus*, and proceed on a detached service with other ships, of which the *Doris* was one, precluded Captain Pearson's remaining. I therefore made Captain Mansfield, of the *Minotaur*, and Captain Wallis, of the *Naiad*, acquainted with all the circumstances previous to my leaving the Black Rocks. At the same time I ordered the French pilot of the *Doris* into the *Naiad*, that he might go on the third night to the appointed place, as that piece of service was to be performed by the *Naiad* instead of the *Doris*.

For their Lordships' further information I beg leave to inclose a copy of his (Mr. Hamon's) letter to me, dated Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 25th August, 1803, which I received by his Majesty's ship *Excellent*, and will best show in what manner he accomplished his undertaking.

When their Lordships have taken into their consideration the importance of gaining positive information, which he did at the hazard of his

life, and the difficulties he encountered, that he is the same person who went into Brest the latter end of last war, when pilot of l'Immortalité, and, being fully impressed that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty are very ready to reward distinguished merit or enterprise, I trust it will be unnecessary for me to add anything further. I therefore beg leave to recommend him in the strongest manner to their Lordships' favour and protection.

And I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

INCLOSURE

HAMON TO REAR-ADMIRAL CAMPBELL

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 25th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have to regret your destination being so secret that I could not tell how or where to address you, for the purpose of expressing my sorrow at your removal, and to inform you of my disappointment in not finding a boat to take me back to the ship either at or near the time or place appointed; by reason of which, after walking some time on the beach, and being fired at, at random in the dark, I suppose by the patrols, I was obliged to return again to the town of B[rest], where I remained until about two o'clock on Sunday, the fifth day of my being on shore, when I hired a boat in the harbour, with two boys in it, to take me on board a certain vessel there, which I pointed out. But it blowing rather fresh after getting a little way, the boys found it too great an undertaking for them, and wished to return. I agreed, re-landed, and paid them each a half-crown, and with their boat sculled out of the harbour to-

wards the ships at the anchorage off the B[rest] R[oads]. About four o'clock the next morning they saw me from the Culloden, and sent a cutter, which picked me up about two miles from the ship ; and I verily believe but for this fortunate circumstance I should have died of thirst and fatigue, for the boat, being leaky, was occasionally to be baled with one of my boots, and what with that, my anxiety, and sculling upwards of fourteen hours without so much as a drop of water to refresh me, I dare say my being nearly exhausted will not surprise you. On the other side I beg to annex a statement of their force as it then stood, while I have the honour to be, &c.,

J. HAMON.

In the road ready for sea :—

4 ships of the line,
4 frigates,
4 sloops (one of which was to slip out the first opportunity),
2 brigs, and
6 gunboats.

In harbour ready for sea :—

2 line-of-battle ships (one of which has since come into the road).

Total force afloat (both in and out of commission) :—

19 ships of the line,
8 frigates,
8 sloops,
4 brigs,
16 gunboats.

Building :—

4 ships of the line (one nearly ready to be launched, the Tonnerre),

5 gunboats, just laid down.

Seamen very scarce.

Their attention seemed principally directed to the building and fitting of gunboats.

No. 54

CAPTAIN WALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Naiad,¹ in the Bay of Brest, 5th July, 1803.

Sir,—From the information I received that a French National schooner was lying in the Saints, and which I had the honour to communicate to you yesterday, I made a disposition of the boats of his Majesty's ship under my command, to bring her out last night, and placed them under the direction of Mr. William Dean, first lieutenant. He was assisted by Mr. John Louis, third lieutenant, Lieutenant Irwin, of the Marines, Messrs. Gordon, Glenny, and Stewart, midshipmen, all volunteers on the occasion; and notwithstanding all the difficulties they had to encounter by the rapidity of the tide, the state she was in, being made fast to the shore, and the number of rocks and shoals they had to pass, they brought her off to me this morning without the smallest accident happening to either the boats or men.

She proves to be la Providence, of near 200 tons burden, only two guns mounted, and had twenty-two men, commanded by Citizen Martres Préville, lieutenant de vaisseau, who, on the approach of our boats, deserted his vessel and got

¹ The Naiad had been ordered, on June 29th, to guard the Passage du Raz, and, as much as possible, to prevent vessels passing that way.

on shore with his officers and crew, except one man and two boys. She was bound to Brest from the foundry, near Nantes, and is laden with heavy cannon of 36, 24, and 18 French pounders, and some choice timber for their navy.¹

Lieutenant Dean's conduct on this occasion merits my warmest approbation for his skill, activity, and perseverance, and he speaks greatly in praise of the officers and men placed under his command.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JAS. WALLIS.

No. 55

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Dreadnought, off Ushant, 7th July, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I sent by the *Aigle*, on the 4th instant, my letter of the 3rd informing their Lordships that Rear-Admiral Campbell was detached with the ships and cutter named in the margin² on the 29th of last month. The *Hazard* was sent in on the 5th at noon, and ordered to be as expeditious as possible in landing a letter directed to you containing intelligence for the information of their Lordships.

I have now sent the *Culloden* in, though very much wanted here (having sprung two main top-masts) to convoy the French vessel mentioned in

¹ In Collingwood's covering dispatch (July 6th) he speaks of the *Providence* as a vessel of considerable value. Caffarelli, writing to Decrès, says that the loss of the schooner troubled him greatly. She had on board 28 guns, and about 200 cubic feet of building timber. The men, he says, could neither resist the attack nor burn their vessel.

² *Canopus*, *Conqueror*, *Malta*, *Sceptre*, *Doris*, *Fox*.

Rear-Admiral Collingwood's letter to me, dated the 6th instant, and I have directed Captain Dacres to replenish and join me immediately, taking care that his stay in port does not exceed seven days.

I have ordered the Neptune to go to Rear-Admiral Collingwood to supply the ships inshore with what water, provisions, and stores can be spared from that ship, as it is my intention to send her immediately to Cawsand Bay to replenish.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 56

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 10th July, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the Ville de Paris joined me yesterday, to which ship I immediately removed.¹

Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, Bart., in the Prince of Wales, joined the squadron this day.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 57

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

An account of ships and vessels captured and detained, &c., by his Majesty's squadron under my command, in addition to the last report, dated the 7th instant (July). [A précis of the list.]

[The Rambler took a French vessel not described, the Endymion a French ship-corvette, and the Ram-

¹ The Ville de Paris, 110, was built at Chatham in 1795, and named from the flag-ship of De Grasse, taken in the action of April 12th, 1782.

bler a Dutch ship and a French ship, which were all sent into Plymouth. The *Naiad's* boats took two French sloops, which were broken up.]

No. 58

CORNWALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th July, 1803.

[After reference to the ill-health of Captain Aylmer, of the *Dragon*, which had joined the inshore squadron, and the want of cutters.]

I am of opinion the two orders relating to the fishing boats, and persons employed in them, sufficiently show the intentions of our Government, that they do not wish to distress individuals unnecessarily; and I am sure I can, with great truth, say I have no desire to enforce the law against the poor and innocent, where the interest of our own country is not materially concerned. I wish to have the state and condition of the ships with you by the return of the *Rambler*.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 59

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, at Sea, 12th July, 1803.¹

Sir,—I am concerned to inform you that my endeavours to get sight of the Dutch squadron which left Ferrol have not kept pace with my wishes. Had my conjectures of their destination

¹ Indorsed by Cornwallis: 'Received by Captain Bedford, 31st July, 1803.' Original in the possession of Mr. C. Wykeham Martin. There is a copy among the dispatches.

proved correct, the success attending it would have justified my measures without the necessity of further explanation.

The reverse unfortunately being the case, it is incumbent on me to enter further into detail, as in my letter by the *Aigle* of the 17th ulto., I had informed you I should only pursue the enemy for forty-eight hours. But, having reconsidered all the circumstances—that the Mediterranean offered no service for a Dutch squadron, and that, had Holland been their object, they would not only have taken the ship which they abandoned with them, but would not have been pressed by the necessity of taking the American's cargo of salt fish for so short a voyage—I felt so strongly impressed with the idea of their destination being the Cape or West Indies that I determined, should the wind continue fair, to go as far as Madeira in hopes of overtaking or finding them there; and in this decision I was considerably strengthened by the comparative naval forces of the two countries at so early a period of the war, and the superiority of our own took from me any apprehension of the two ships being suddenly wanted to unite with your flag. I landed at Madeira on the 24th ulto. without anchoring the ship, but found from the Consul no sort of intelligence on the subject of my wishes, and, although our voyage back has been uncommonly tedious from adverse winds, and made me very uneasy, yet I trust the motives of my conduct will free me from your displeasure, as I had none but that of zeal for the measures I have adopted.

Having, by accident, met with his Majesty's ship *Thunderer*, I have charged Captain Bedford with this letter to inform you of my proceedings.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 60

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 15th July, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the Spartiate joined me on the 13th. Captain Manley returned, in consequence of his not having heard of the ships under the orders of Sir Edward Pellew.

I should therefore suppose he has obtained some intimation from vessels at sea of the course the Dutch ships have steered, and has followed them further than he intended doing by his letter to me dated the 17th ultimo, a copy of which I transmitted to you for their Lordships' information.

That part of the coast and the port of Rochefort being thereby left open for the entrance of any of the enemy's line-of-battle ships from abroad, I have for the present sent Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder in the Prince of Wales, with the Dreadnought and Spartiate, to cruise there, for the purpose of intercepting any ships attempting to get in; but, upon the return of the ships with Sir Edward Pellew, he is with all possible dispatch to rejoin me with the Prince of Wales and Dreadnought, leaving the three ships that were at first intended for that service, and the Acasta frigate, which the Rear-Admiral will find upon that station, under the direction of the senior captain. I have sent the Naiad near the rendezvous which has been appointed for the Spartiate by Sir Edward Pellew, in case he should return.

Rear-Admiral Collingwood informs me that he perceives no alteration at the Port of Brest; that two or three ships are under sail every day; and

that the gunboats, to the number of eight, are seen frequently moving about at the entrance of Brest Road.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 61

CAPTAIN PAGET TO CORNWALLIS

Endymion, at Sea, 16th July, 1803.

Lat. 47° 50' N., long. 22° 40' W.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that this morning his Majesty's ship I command captured l'Adour, French store-ship from Martinique, bound to Rochefort. L'Adour is pierced for twenty guns, and was commanded by le Capitaine de Frégate Mondelot, who was totally unacquainted with the war.

I have also the satisfaction to add that a French merchant brig, laden with coffee, cotton, and sugar, from Guadeloupe for Ostend, was taken by the Endymion two days ago.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
CHAS. PAGET.

¹ Caffarelli, writing to Decrès, reports an episode that occurred at this time. One night parties landed from some of the ships' boats, and broke the doors and windows of the signalling station, and damaged the telegraphic apparatus for communication with Ushant. 'Truly the coast is in a deplorable state, and I am surprised that other misfortunes do not befall us, such as pillage or burning.' He said the landing party might have spiked the guns, and surmised that we either lacked enterprise or did not care for useless operations.

BLOCKADE OF BREST

No. 62

CORNWALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Ville de Paris, off Brest, 17th July, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to issue the inclosed orders and signals to his Majesty's ships under my command with you. There are observed to be in the outer road of Brest, an account of which I send herewith, nineteen ships and vessels ; ten or twelve gunboats in the basin at Camaret. The large ones, rigged with two masts, are supposed to be bomb vessels, and lie outside.

I have no doubt every possible precaution will be taken to prevent any getting out. I have for the present placed the Rambler and Nimrod, with the Sirius, under your direction.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 63

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 20th July, 1803.

Sir,—I have had the honour of receiving your letter, with the private signals of the homeward-bound trade from Jamaica, sent by the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, which I have delivered to the cruisers employed for their protection.

There are at present upon that service, under my orders, the Hussar, *Endymion*, *Egyptienne*, *Hazard* sloop ; and I have sent the *Plantagenet* for a short time, Captain Hamond having informed me that the French line-of-battle ship he was employed

to watch has been hove down at Lorient, and will not be for some time ready for sea.¹

I have also received the account of ships of war at the different French ports obtained by Admiral Sir John Colpoys, and sent to me by their Lordships' directions, and I enclose the observations of the force in the outer road of Brest and in Camaret Bay, made by Captain Domett when the *Ville de Paris* stood in on the fifteenth of this month, and the day following on board the *Sirius*. What are there called the large gunboats are of great size, and most probably, from the way they are masted, carry a mortar, having one large mast and a mizen mast. They are of great length, one something larger than the other, and have been evidently built for a particular purpose.²

They are at Brest very busy exercising their men on board the ships, and the other day there was a sham fight between a corvette and a brig of war, working about in the road—a great deal of firing, tacking, making and shortening sail, and different evolutions.

Since writing the above the Hussar has joined me, and I have sent her to give notice to the captains of any of his Majesty's ships or vessels along the coast from Ushant to the *Ile de Batz* of the number of gunboats in Camaret Road, as I think it

¹ Several English merchant ships having been captured, the *Plantagenet* was ordered (July 17) to cruise two or three degrees to the westward of soundings, and stretch across from 47° to 50° N. lat., and the *Hazard* from three degrees westward of soundings as far as 15° W. long., and from 48° to 50° N. lat.

² The only vessels of the invasion flotilla ordinarily carrying mortars appear to have been the *péniches*, which were lug-sail boats, 63 feet, 9 inches long, and often carried a 6·2-inch mortar forward and one of 4·7 inches aft. The *chaloupes canonnières* (lug-sail) of the first class were larger (81 feet long), and the *prames* (corvette-rigged) larger still (108 feet 3 inches).

probable they may attempt the first westerly wind to pass the Passage du Four.

I have then directed Captain Wilkinson to go to Plymouth Sound to land prisoners, replenish his provisions and stores, taking care not to stay longer than forty-eight hours in port, and to return as expeditiously as possible.

The Nimrod, hired cutter, joined the squadron on the 16th. I have placed her inshore, but as she is of very little force I have cautioned them to take great care not to be surprised.

The Culloden returned to me from Cawsand Bay on the 17th.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

In the Outer Road of Brest, 16 July, 1803: Six sail of the line (one of which appears smaller than the others), four frigates, two large ship-corvettes, five brigs, one schooner, one cutter.

In Camaret: Two very large long dogger-rigged gunboats, ten or twelve lug-sail gunboats.

St. Matthew's, N.W. b. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. Bertheaume, N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. Camaret Point, with all the Bay open, S. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 64

CORNWALLIS TO THE SEVERAL CAPTAINS OF SHIPS OFF THE ILE DE BATZ

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 20th July, 1803.

Sir,—I send the Hussar to give you notice that there are ten or twelve gunboats, two of them very

¹ She was sent inshore with the Boadicea on that day.

large, in Camaret Bay, probably waiting a favourable opportunity of westerly wind to pass to the eastward. You will be pleased to communicate this to others of his Majesty's ships and vessels along the coast.

I am, Sir, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 65

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN.

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 23rd July, 1803.

Sir,—I received this morning, by the Pickle schooner, your letter dated the 14th, and I beg leave to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in answer to their directions contained therein, that the Tonnant and Mars were detached the 6th of June, and that I have not heard from Sir Edward Pellew since his letter to me dated the 17th of that month, which was immediately communicated to you for their Lordships' information.¹

There does not happen, at present, to be a great choice of two-decked ships to form the inshore squadron, but their Lordships may be assured that every attention shall be paid by me to what I conceive from that letter to be their desire, when Rear-Admiral Collingwood leaves that station.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 66

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 23rd July, 1803.

Sir,—The enemy's ships in the port of Brest remain in the same state they were when you last

¹ Pellew's cruise to Madeira at this time, in search of the Dutch, is described in No. 59.

saw them. On the 20th all the gunboats (except the two large ketches) went from Camaret into Brest Harbour. On the 21st three of them returned to Camaret, and yesterday two more, so that there are now seven in that bay.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 67

CAPTAIN WOOD TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

Acasta, at Sea, 23rd July, 1803.

State of French ships and vessels at the Ile de Ré, and at the Ile d'Aix, when reconnoitred by his Majesty's ship Acasta, Jas. A. Wood, Esq., captain, from Basque Roads, and the Pertuis Breton, on the 21st and 22nd July, 1803, by order of Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, Bart. :

One frigate, in the Ile d'Aix Road.

One frigate within the Isle of Oléron, in Mau-musson Road.

At the Ile de Ré two cutters, one schooner.

Armed merchant vessels at ditto : one ship with Prussian colours, seven brigs, two galliots, and nine sloops.

At the entrance of Rochelle, one armed ship like a small frigate.

J. A. Wood.

No. 68

*CAPTAIN WALLIS TO CORNWALLIS*¹

Naiad, off Ushant, 24th July, 1803.

Sir,—In pursuance of the orders you were pleased to give me on the 14th inst., I stood to

¹ A covering dispatch, by the Nimrod, 7 A.M., July 24th. The French squadron referred to was that of Rear-Admiral

the southward in his Majesty's ship under my command, and on Sunday morning, the 17th, being off Cape Prior, I stood in to Ferrol Bay, and brought to a coasting vessel just come out of Corunna, the master of which I got on board, who gave me the following intelligence, viz. :

That there were now lying in Corunna, under quarantine, four French ships of the line, one frigate, and a sloop. That this squadron arrived there five days ago from San Domingo, commanded by a Rear-Admiral. The day before they entered Corunna they captured an English sloop of war, with three masts, which is now lying with them in that harbour under quarantine.

He also says that there is a Dutch line-of-battle ship in Ferrol, but in such a bad condition that it is expected she will be broken up there.

As I considered this intelligence of no small magnitude, I stood immediately to the northward, under a press of sail, to acquaint you of it, but the wind constantly blowing from the northward and eastward prevented me from joining you before this day.

A journal of my proceedings and the state and condition of the Naiad accompanies this.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JAS. WALLIS.

Bedout, concerning whose return from the West Indies secret intelligence was transmitted to Cornwallis from the Admiralty on June 25th (see No. 42). The line-of-battle ships were the *Argonaute* (flag), *Fougueux*, *Redoutable*, and *Héros* (all 74's). After Trafalgar the *Argonaute* and *Héros* escaped into Cadiz, the other two ships being captured ; but the *Redoutable*, from whose mizen-top Nelson was shot, foundered, while the *Fougueux* became a wreck. See No. 78, *et seq.*, for the circumstances of the evading of the blockading ships by Admiral Bedout.

No. 69

CORNWALLIS TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 24th July, 1803.

Sir,—The Naiad has just joined me with intelligence that four French ships of the line, with a frigate, and sloop of war, which they took just before their arrival, had put into Corunna on the 13th instant.

I have immediately sent you this intelligence that you may look out for them, if they should move, or proceed and block them up if they should continue at that port. The Acasta you found off Rochefort, and you will send any information you may be able to obtain to me off Ushant. I have reason to believe that the destination of those ships was Toulon.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 70

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 25th July, 1803.

Sir,—The only change that has taken place amongst the enemy's vessels is the addition of a gun-brig to the seven gun-vessels which were before in Camaret Bay. The ships in the harbour remain as before.

I have added four signals to those which were formerly in use by the inshore ships, to communicate information respecting the gun-vessels, and, if you please, I will in future signify to you by these signals the station and number of the gun-vessels.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 71

CAFFARELLI TO DECRÈS¹

Brest, 6 thermidor, an XI (25th July, 1803).

Les Anglais sont constamment sur nos côtes ; quelques vaisseaux au large d'Ouessant, quatre ou cinq mouillent dans le jour aux Pierres-Noires, une frégate et une corvette se tiennent à Douarnenez sous voile, une corvette et un cutter viennent jusqu'à l'entrée du Goulet et y croisent constamment. Leurs embarcations descendent sur les îles voisines, où il n'y a pas de troupes ; elles vont aussi à la côte loin des lieux fréquentés, et ceux qui les montent peuvent prendre telles informations qu'il est possible d'arracher, par crainte ou par insinuation.

Un habitant de l'île Béniguet a fait, le 3, un rapport qui m'est parvenu aujourd'hui : ' Les Anglais sont descendus à Béniguet armés ; ils ont demandé s'il n'y avait pas, au Conquet, un convoi composé de quinze chasse-marées venant du nord, et de quoi ils étaient chargés. Il a répondu qu'il n'en savait rien. Ils ont répliqué qu'ils découvriraient de plus en ce port dix autres navires, en tout vingt-cinq. Un officier anglais a parié avec la femme de cet habitant qu'avant peu de jours ils en auraient enlevé quelques-uns ; le pari était de dix louis contre une de ses vaches.'

Jamais, dans la dernière guerre, je n'avais vu un pareil abandon du Finistère. Brest et l'armée navale offraient bien plus de ressources pour les cas d'attaque ou pour la défense habituelle.

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 210, f. 214.

No. 72

SIR E. NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

25th July, 1803.

Sir,—I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that, by a return which has been made to their Lordships, it appears that a French vessel was captured by H.M. ship *Thunderer* on the 6th inst., in the lat. 44° N., and long. 16° W., and to state to you that it is of importance to His Majesty's service that you should keep your squadron more collected off the ports of the enemy, to watch their proceedings, and be ready to act as circumstances may be found to require.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.¹

No. 73

CAPTAIN HAMOND TO CORNWALLIS

Plantagenet, at Sea, 25th July, 1803.

Sir,—A French brig-privateer, le *Courier de Terre Neuve*, of four guns and fifty-four men, belonging to St. Malo, was yesterday captured by his Majesty's ship under my command, in lat. 49° N., long. $14^{\circ} 30'$ W. She sailed some days ago from Abervrac'h, and has not taken anything.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GRAHAM E. HAMOND.²

¹ See No. 86, and No. 89 for the Journal of the *Thunderer*.

² Captain (afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Sir Graham E.) Hamond (1779–1862) had been present in Howe's victory of June 1, 1794, and the battle of Copenhagen. He was appointed to the *Plantagenet*, 74, in February 1803, and was in command of the ship until November, capturing meanwhile the *Courier de Terre Neuve* and the *Atalante*. In 1804 he commanded the *Lively*, 38, and, in that frigate, took part in the capture of the three Spanish treasure ships, October 5 (*London Gazette*, 1804, p. 1309), and two days later of the *San Miguel*, another treasure ship. He was promoted to rear-admiral 1825, vice-admiral 1837, admiral 1847, and admiral of the fleet 1862.

No. 74

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

26th July, 1803.

With respect to the orders you have given to the Plantagenet for proceeding to the westward to look out for the homeward-bound trade, their Lordships have commanded me to refer you to my letter of yesterday, and to acquaint you that it appears to them to be essentially necessary, from the accounts received of the state of the enemy's force, that you should not detach any of your line-of-battle ships on services of that nature, and that you should call on the captain of the Thunderer to account for his being so far off his station on the 6th, it appearing by your disposition that he had been stationed by you off Lorient.

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 75

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN WILKINSON

[*Secret.*]

[Instructions for the Hussar to cruise from three or four degrees to the westward of soundings to 20° W. long., and from 47° N. lat. to 50° N. lat., for the protection of trade, &c., and inclosing the private signals communicated by Admiral Duckworth. The *Endymion* was ordered (August 1) to cruise outside the Hussar's station to 25° W. long. and from 48° to 50° N. lat.]

'Private signals to be used by the homeward-bound trade from Jamaica sailing under the convoy on the 15th of June, 1803.

'BY DAY

'The first ship making the signal shall hoist a flag *RED*, over a flag *WHITE* with a *BLUE CROSS*, at the *main top-gallant mast-head*.

'To be answered by a *flag YELLOW*, at the same place. The ship first making the signal shall then hoist a flag quartered *RED* and *WHITE* at the *fore top-gallant mast-head*.

'Then the ships shall each show their respective number upon the list of the Navy.

'BY NIGHT

'The ship first making the signal is to show *two lights, one over the other*, and burn *one false fire*.

'To be answered by *three lights of equal height, where best seen*, and burning *two false fires*.

'The ship first hailed shall answer "King George;"

'The ship which hailed shall reply "Whom God;"

'Then the ship first hailed shall say "Preserve."

'Given, &c.,

'J. T. DUCKWORTH.'

MEMO.—The above to be communicated to any of his Majesty's cruisers that you may meet with, and look out for the convoy about the time they may be expected accordingly.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, off Ushant,
26th July, 1803.

No. 76

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

[*Extract.*]

Venerable, off Brest, 26th July, 1803.

A Danish ship came out of Brest this evening. The intelligence gained by her corresponds with former accounts that several ships are fitting out, with which they make but little progress, and that the chief attention is paid to gun-vessels, of which

the Dane says about twenty are ready. She was in ballast, and had been at Brest ever since March last, most of the time under embargo.

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 77

CAPTAIN BEDFORD TO CORNWALLIS

Thunderer, at Sea, 26th July, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to report to you that on the 26th inst. I captured the *Vénus*, French privateer, pierced for twenty-eight guns, mounting sixteen six-pounders and two eight-pound carronades, 150 men, commanded by Mons. Lemperrière.

She is a fine vessel, quite new, sails remarkably fast, well found, coppered, and measures 358 tons. From the report I have received she is calculated for his Majesty's service. She sailed from Bordeaux the 21st inst. in company with four other privateers.

I have the honour to be, &c.

W. BEDFORD.

No. 78

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Canopus, at Sea, 28th July, 1803.

Sir,—I beg you will please to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, in compliance with the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis's orders to me of the 29th of June (a copy of which I beg leave to inclose herewith¹), I

¹ These orders were issued in pursuance of Admiralty instructions to Cornwallis, dated June 25th. See No. 42 *ante*, where the text of Sir Evan Nepean's letter is given. Cornwallis's

shifted my flag to the *Canopus*, and proceeded with the ships named in the margin ¹ off Cape St. Vincent, where I arrived on the 6th inst. in the evening. I thought it advisable to gain, if possible, some intelligence from Lagos and Faro, and for that purpose I sent Lieutenant Fisher, one of the lieutenants of the *Canopus*, an officer in whom I could confide, in the *Fox* cutter to those places, with orders to gain all the information he could respecting any squadron of French line-of-battle ships that might have appeared off. I am sorry to say he returned without being able to obtain any satisfactory account, and I therefore judged it expedient for the good of his Majesty's service to send the *Doris* to Gibraltar with dispatches for the Governor, Commissioner, and Commanding Sea Officer for the very desirable end of gaining information if the French squadron had passed the Straits, and also of the intentions or disposition of the Spanish Government towards Great Britain, the naval force in Cadiz, Algeciras, &c. At the same time I availed myself of so good an opportunity to send in a French ship, from Martinique to Marseilles, taken by the *Conqueror* on the 9th inst., with a cargo of sugar, coffee, and cotton said to be worth about 20,000*l.*, and I am happy to add that she had also on board specie to the amount of 45,000 dollars—viz. 40,000 in doubloons and 5,000 in dollars.

From accounts received by a Gibraltar privateer, which was boarded by the *Conqueror*, stating that, owing to the small French cruisers having given information of the war, several French merchantmen had put into Cadiz, there is every reason to believe

order to Campbell, in terms almost identical, instructing him to intercept the squadron of Rear-Admiral Bedout, is not printed here.

¹ *Canopus*, *Conqueror*, *Malta*, *Sceptre*, *Doris*, *Fox* cutter.

that they will give, or may already have given, the like information to the French line-of-battle ships, which may determine them to make the coast of Barbary in preference to Cape St. Vincent, the probability of which Admiral Cornwallis suggested in his orders to me.

Neither the vessel taken by the *Conqueror* nor one since captured by a privateer and boarded by the *Fox* cutter had heard of the war, and this circumstance renders it difficult for me to decide what station to take, as the most likely to fall in with Admiral Bedout.

I have inclosed herewith for their Lordships' information a list of the rendezvous I have given out in addition to those in the appendix to the signal book, and I have taken No. 55—viz. south from Cape St. Mary's [C. de Santa Maria] 8 to 15 leagues—judging it a likely place to intercept the French squadron should they be inclined to go into Cadiz or to run for Cape Spartel.¹ If I can satisfy myself that they are likely to have information of hostilities, I shall proceed off Rendezvous No. 59—viz. west from Cape Spartel 7 to 10 leagues—spreading the squadron in hopes of falling in with them.

Early on Sunday morning, the 10th inst., we discovered a line-of-battle ship, and accordingly gave chase to her. We soon found her to be a Spanish ship of seventy-four guns, with a flag at the main topmast-head, and I afterwards learnt from a vessel spoken by the *Malta* that she was the *Montañas* from Cadiz going to Ferrol.

The following day, the *Conqueror* being on the look out, Captain Louis made the signal that he had intelligence to communicate, upon which I bore up to join him ; and I am very sorry to acquaint you

¹ Inclosure A.

that from a galliot which he had boarded, and which had just sailed from Cadiz, he was informed that a French line-of-battle ship from San Domingo had arrived at that port on the 8th inst., having put in there through want of water, &c. From the wind being easterly, with a heavy swell from the eastward, I was induced to believe she had put into Cadiz in consequence of the Levant wind. On receipt of this unwelcome intelligence, I determined, as the most effectual means to be adopted on the occasion, to send Lieutenant Nicholson, in the Fox, into Cadiz with a friendly unofficial letter to Mr. Duff, his Majesty's Consul there, requesting him to send me out news, newspapers, some vegetables, &c., &c., giving Lieutenant Nicholson secret verbal instructions to learn from him the name of the French ship, time of her sailing from San Domingo, whether she formed a part of Admiral Bedout's squadron, and, in short, to collect the fullest information in his power relative thereto; and to join me again without loss of time, agreeably to the rendezvous then delivered to him—viz. west from Cape Spartel from 7 to 10 leagues—remaining there ten or twelve hours—and not finding me to proceed to Rendezvous No. 55—viz. south from Cape St. Mary's 8 to 15 leagues.

The same rendezvous was given to Captain Pearson for his guidance in returning from Gibraltar. On the 15th in the evening the Fox cutter joined, and brought me intelligence from Mr. Duff that the French ship in Cadiz was *l'Aigle*, of seventy-four guns, that she sailed from Port au Prince on the 27th of May, and arrived on the 8th inst. at Cadiz, being very short of provisions. Her own crew only consists of 350 men. She brought with her a black general (*La Plume*) and 200 blacks, passengers.

Three sail of the line, names not known, sailed

from Cape Français about the same time l'Aigle sailed from Port au Prince, and it is reported that they have passed up the Mediterranean; but the report is not credited by Mr. Duff.¹

Mr. Duff also informs me that the Montañas, the ship we saw on the 9th inst., is gone to Galicia to be laid up, as are also the San Julian of fifty [-eight] guns and two frigates, the Peter² and Santa Lucia.

A fifty-gun ship, the Santa Rufina frigate of thirty-

¹ After the Peace of Amiens the First Consul had turned his attention to the suppression of the negro revolt in San Domingo under Toussaint-Louverture. Villaret-Joyeuse, in command of the naval forces, left Brest 14th December, 1801, with 15 sail of the line and 6 frigates, and General le Clerc with a considerable body of troops. The ravages of yellow fever decimated the army, and General le Clerc and about 25,000 men died. General Rochambeau then assumed the chief military command, but in October 1802 the French were blockaded by the blacks at Cape Français. Villaret-Joyeuse was recalled in April 1803, and Latouche-Tréville, who succeeded him, returned home invalided in July, the command then devolving upon Captain Barré. Most of the ships, however, were despatched home. As these papers show, the Aigle reached Cadiz, while Rear-Admiral Bedout found shelter with the Argonaute, Redoutable, Fougueux, and Héros at Corunna and Ferrol. The Duguay-Trouin and the frigate Guerrière followed to the former port. Many ships, however, homeward bound from the West Indies were captured or destroyed by vessels under Cornwallis's orders, including the frigates Franchise and Bayonnaise, the corvettes Colombe and Bacchante, the brig Epervier, and others. The Duquesne, 74, the frigate Créole, the corvette Mignonne, and the brigs Lodi, Aiguille, and Vigilant were captured in the West Indies, and, at the surrender of the French at Cape Français, the frigates Surveillante (Troude says Sémillante), Clorinde, and Vertu, the corvette Sagesse, and the brigs Vautour, Papillon, Alerte, and Cerf, with some transports and traders, fell into our hands. (Chevalier, *Marine Française, Consulat et Empire*, 85.)

² The names of the Spanish ships are not quite correctly given in the original, but are corrected here. The Peter frigate is evidently an error. Marliani, *Combate de Trafalgar*, names no such ship. The San Pedro Apóstol was a 74, and the San Pedro Alcántara a 64.

four guns, and two storeships are likewise gone up to the Carraca to be laid up. They are fitting out there the *Astrea*, of thirty-four guns, destined to carry quicksilver to Buenos Ayres. The brig *Vigilancia*, of fourteen guns, has sailed for Malaga to cruise against the smugglers. That in all the Spanish arsenals the greatest inactivity prevails, and that everything denotes a desire on the part of Spain to remain on good terms with Great Britain. It is said the French Government is now pressing them hard to declare. They will, of course, avoid doing so as long as they can, and it is doubted which side they may take if not left neutral. Mr. Duff also tells me that Lord Nelson was off Toulon about the 20th June, and that there were three ships armed at that place, and four or five more that might be so. The *Fox* brought out four volunteers for the service from the Consul, who sends round to Gibraltar as many as he can pick up.

The Révolutionnaire called off Cadiz about the 4th inst., and took away the only merchant ship then at that port. She had twelve sail under convoy at the time, one of them a French East Indiaman that she had taken. On the 17th, having stood over to Rendezvous No. 59 in hopes of meeting with the *Doris*, I fell in on the 18th with the *Victorieuse*, which had left Gibraltar on the 7th, but had seen two English vessels into safety in that port on the 15th; and I learnt from Captain Richards that nothing had been seen or heard of the French squadron in the Straits. I judged it proper to send the *Fox* cutter to reconnoitre Cadiz, and the *Victorieuse* to Gibraltar, with directions to Captain Pearson to join me at the Rendezvous No. 55, as I meant immediately to return with the squadron to that station, spreading as the most likely means to

fall in with the enemy, after which Captain Richards was to follow his former orders.

On the 20th, the *Doris* not having joined me, nor having received any information relating to the French squadron, further than what I have already stated, to lead me to suppose but that they might be still on their passage, I thought it necessary to keep with the whole of the squadron on this station, which I shall continue to do unto the 31st July, unless I should previously receive authentic information to induce me to act otherwise.

On the 31st the *Fox* cutter returned and brought me intelligence that the French ship still remained at Cadiz, and by a vessel coming out, which Lieut. Nicholson boarded, he was informed that she had sprung her main mast in the act of staying it the day before.

On the 22nd I was joined by the *Doris*, and received the information contained in the papers, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,¹ which I forward for their Lordships' information, the whole of which tends to convince me that the French admiral had been informed of hostilities on his passage, and that, however he might be originally destined, he had determined to make for some of the ports in the Bay, which, as so considerable a time has elapsed since he was seen off Cape St. Vincent, he must have before this reached. But as I am anxious to decide with the greatest certainty and caution before I quit this station, I have this evening sent Lieutenant Fisher (of the *Canopus*) in the *Fox* cutter to Faro to gain all possible information on the subject.

On the 26th the *Fox* cutter returned, and Lieutenant Fisher gave me the intelligence contained in his letter, a copy of which I inclose.² It was

¹ Inclosures B to G.

² Inclosure H.

of so important a nature that I was happy the sloop he received it from was still in sight, which enabled me to have the master on board to examine him myself on the subject, which I accordingly did, and found what he said perfectly to correspond with Lieutenant Fisher's letter, but could not learn from him the name of the French admiral or ships.

In consequence of the above information, preparatory to separating the squadron, I proceeded to reconnoitre Cadiz to be satisfied that nothing further had got into that port.

July 28.—From calms and light winds I was prevented getting off Cadiz until this afternoon, when I was informed by two fishing boats, which I boarded, that a French corvette had arrived there, but she appeared by our glasses, with which we saw her distinctly, to be a very small ship.

I have, therefore, agreeably to the directions contained in Admiral Cornwallis's orders, dispatched the Sceptre to the East Indies, having completed her provisions and such stores as were necessary to five months from the Conqueror; the Conqueror (who will carry this narrative) to join Admiral Cornwallis off Brest or wherever else the fleet may be; and the cutter to England with an account of my proceedings for the information of their Lordships. But I have judged it expedient for the good of his Majesty's service to leave the Malta and Doris off Cadiz for the purpose of watching the French ship *l'Aigle* in that port. A copy of my order to Captain Buller I herewith inclose,¹ and shall proceed with the Canopus to Gibraltar, and join Lord Nelson without loss of time.

As I understand the *Triumph* is at Gibraltar for the purpose of getting a new bowsprit, if it does not

¹ Inclosure I.

materially interfere with the orders of Lord Nelson, and the service will allow of it, I shall give Sir Robt. Barlow orders to relieve the Malta, and send directions to Captain Buller to join Admiral Cornwallis with all possible despatch.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

INCLOSURE A

*Secret rendezvous in addition to those given out
from the Admiralty*

NO.

53. Lisbon.

54. South from Cape St. Vincent 8 to 15
leagues.

55. South from Cape St. Mary's 8 to 15 leagues.

56. Lagos.

57. Off Cadiz.

58. West from Cape Trafalgar 7 to 10 leagues.

59. West from Cape Spartel 7 to 10 leagues.

60. Jeremias Bay.

61. Tangier.

62. Gibraltar Bay.

63. Tetuan Bay.

Given on board the Canopus, at sea, 6th July,
1803.

GEO. CAMPBELL.

To the Respective Captains.

INCLOSURE B

CAPTAIN PEARSON TO CAMPBELL

Doris, at Sea, 22nd July, 1803.

Copy, No. 1.

Sir,—I have the honour to inclose a letter from Captain Corbet, of his Majesty's sloop Bittern, with

a statement of information received from him respecting a squadron of the enemy's ships of war, seen off Cape St. Vincent on the 24th June last, and also of the same squadron having been seen a few days previous to this by an English merchantman since arrived at Gibraltar; and at the same time have to acquaint you that the whole tenour of the information I was enabled to collect from the Pratique Master and others at Gibraltar so nearly coincided with the inclosed statement that little or no doubt can be entertained of its authenticity, as several vessels boarded by him have stated that they (the above-mentioned squadron) were seen on different dates steering to the N.E.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

R. H. PEARSON.

INCLOSURE C

CAPTAIN CORBET TO CAPTAIN PEARSON.

Bittern, Gibraltar Bay, 17th July, 1803.

Copy, No. 2.

Sir,—I have the honour to inclose for your information the detail of intelligence gained by H.M. sloop under my command concerning a squadron seen off Cape St. Vincent on the 24th of June last. I have to add that the same squadron was passed through on the 25th by a San Domingo man taken by this ship, the master of which (who is an intelligent man) is assured they were French, and that they were a squadron that were to sail soon after him from San Domingo.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBT. CORBET.¹

¹ Captain Robert Corbet, an officer of great courage and resolution, but whose brutal treatment of his men has been the theme

INCLOSURE D

*Intelligence inclosed in Captain Corbet's letter to
Captain Pearson*

Copy, No. 3.

The Spanish brig boarded by the Bittern's boat on the night of the 8th July was boarded by an officer belonging to a seventy-four gun ship on the 24th June last, sixty-one leagues due west of Cape St. Vincent. The seventy-four hoisted no colours ; she was one of a squadron consisting of four sail of two-deckers, all of whom were painted bright yellow and apparently in good condition. The officer informed the master of the brig that war had been declared between France and England forty-one days, gave him a very correct bearing and distance of Cape St. Vincent, which he said had been seen by the squadron four days back, and also that the

of many writers, served with distinction on the coast of Egypt in 1801, and won high praise from Nelson for his capture of the *Hirondelle* privateer on the renewal of war. In 1808 his irregular assumption of the duties of senior officer at Bombay drew down the strong censure of Pellew. He seems to have been hated by his crew in the *Néréide*, and, on the passage to the Cape of Good Hope for his trial, there was a mutiny, for which ten men were condemned to death, though one only was executed. Charges of the greatest cruelty were brought against Corbet, but he was acquitted of all save for having punished men 'with sticks of an improper size, and such as are not usual in his Majesty's service.' He was, however, severely censured by the Admiralty for his harshness. He was killed in the *Africaine*, September 13, 1810, some said shot by his own men, others, with greater appearance of truth, that he pulled off the bandages from his leg from which his foot had been torn by a round shot, and bled to death, preferring not to survive his defeat. With ill judgment he had attacked two French frigates near the Mauritius, and the *Africaine* struck, with 163 killed and wounded out of 295. She was recaptured the same day by Commodore Rowley.

squadron had sailed from Europe. The officer had written the bearings of Cape St. Vincent in the brig's log book, which I saw, and believe to have been written by a Frenchman. The brig left the squadron steering W.N.W., wind at north. During the time the officer was aboard, the brig's crew collected from the boat alongside that the squadron has sailed from the West Indies, not from Europe. The officer and boat's crew spoke French, and the master of the brig supposed that the squadron was French.

ROB. NICHOLAS, Lieut.

INCLOSURE E

Intelligence from Captain Pearson

Copy, No. 4.

Lieutenant Lennard, of his Majesty's 54th regiment, states that being on his passage from England in an English merchantman (June 18) she fell in with a squadron of four sail of the enemy's line-of-battle ships, the *Island of St. Mary's* (Western Isles) bearing N.W. about fifteen leagues, and that, having light airs and calms, they remained in company for three days, during which time they steered a course for Cape St. Vincent; but that during the third night they altered their course, and were at daylight a considerable distance to the northward of the merchantman, and were, the last he saw of them, steering about N.E. Mr. Lennard also states that they were very particular in their inquiries whether there was any appearance of war, and repeated these inquiries two days following.

INCLOSURE F

Intelligence received from Lieut. Layman,¹ of the Victory, in charge of the Ambuscade, at Gibraltar.

Copy, No. 5.

Names and force of the French ships at San Domingo, 28th April, 1803.

	Guns	
Le Duquesne . . .	74	Rear-Ad. Latouche ²
L'Aigle . . .	74	Added to squadron for Toulon
Retardi [<i>sic</i>] . . .	74	
Hardi [<i>sic</i>] . . .	74	
A Spanish ship . . .	74	
Le Duguay-Trouin . . .	74	To sail for Toulon in May
L'Argonaute . . .	74	
Le Héros . . .	74	
La Guerrière . . .	40	
La Clorinde . . .	36	

¹ Lieutenant (afterwards Commander) William Layman (1768–1826) had an interesting history, which may be read in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He was present at the battle of Copenhagen. When Nelson left the Victory and proceeded to the Mediterranean in the Amphion, Layman remained in the ship. On her passage out she recaptured the Ambuscade, which had been taken by the Bayonnaise in 1798. Layman was sent on board, and the Ambuscade arrived at Gibraltar with a French merchantman which she had captured. The capture was condemned as a *droit of Admiralty* because she had been taken by a ship not in commission. Nelson had a very high opinion of Layman, but thought his 'tongue ran too fast.'

² Latouche-Tréville, who succeeded Villaret-Joyeuse in command at San Domingo, was invalided and returned home, Captain Barré, of the *Surveillante*, taking his place. Lieutenant Layman's list is not complete. The Duquesne was captured by the Vanguard and Tartar near Cape Maysi, July 25. The Aigle came east and reached Cadiz, and the Argonaute and Héros were two of the ships with Bedout, while the Duguay-Trouin and Guerrière also gained safety at Corunna. The Clorinde and Vertu were among the ships surrendered at Cape Français, and the Mignonne was one of those captured in West Indian waters. The Bayonnaise fell in with the Ardent on November 28 near Cape Finisterre, and was run ashore and blown up to save her

La Poursuivante .	44	24 Prs.
La Vertu .	36	
La Cornélie .	36	
La Jerine [<i>sic</i>] .	32	
La Nécessité .	50	
La Bayonnaise .	26	
La Mignonne .	24	
La Serpente .	24	
La Diligente .	24	J. Bonaparte to Mar- tinique

La Franchise, of thirty-six guns, parted from the Ambuscade on the 27th April bound for Brest, but she would most probably be taken by Adm. Cornwallis's fleet.¹

Remarks

Some alteration took place in the squadron that was to leave San Domingo in May, as on the 28th four sail of the line left that island and were spoken with by an American schooner (on board of which was an officer of the 54th Regt.) on the 10th June in longitude 35°. They were very anxious in their inquiries whether it was war with England, and on the 28th June they were seen, by a French ship brought into Gibraltar, eighty leagues to the westward of Cape St. Vincent, and on the 6th July l'Aigle got into Cadiz.

INCLOSURE G

A letter received from Lieut. Layman, of the Victory, in charge of the Ambuscades, to the Senior Officer commanding H.M. ships, &c., at Gibraltar.

Copy, No. 6.

I beg leave to acquaint you that from the general arrangement made at San Domingo it from capture. (See inclosure with No. 168, p. 218.) Other names in Lieutenant Layman's list are obviously incorrect.

¹ The Franchise was captured by the Thunderer and Minotaur on May 28. See No. 20, p. 23.

appears the following ships were to sail from that island for Toulon about the second week in May :

Le Duguay-Trouin	74 guns
L'Argonaute	74 do.
Le Héros	74 do.
La Guerrière	40 do.
La Clorinde ¹	36 do. ;

and that on the 28th April the French at San Domingo had not the most distant idea of hostilities with Great Britain, and I have reason to suppose the ships very ill prepared for combat.

We received intelligence from a Portuguese of a French frigate mounting fifty-four guns cruising to intercept this ship ; and on the 19th instant off Cape St. Mary's we passed within half a mile of a ship of that description, although she showed Spanish colours.

H.M. late ship Ambuscade, in the Gut of Gibraltar, June 23, 1803.

MEMO.—The frigate *Revanche* was not only known by the Frenchmen on board here, but has been since seen under French colours by our prize.

INCLOSURE H

LIEUT. WILLIAM FISHER TO CAMPBELL

Canopus, 26th July, 1803.

Sir,—In obedience to your orders of the 22nd inst., I proceeded in the *Fox* cutter to Faro, where the only intelligence I could learn was that the Elbe and the Weser were blockaded by a squadron under the command of Sir Sidney Smith, and that

¹ The *Clorinde* did not sail from Cape Français with the other ships ; the *Revanche* seems to have taken her place, and was one of the vessels at Corunna.

a privateer which had taken a French prize into Faro was ordered by the Portuguese Governor, in obedience to orders from his Court, to quit the port as soon as possible.

I then proceeded agreeably to your directions to join the squadron, and on the 25th inst., at 7 in the evening, I boarded an English sloop, which sailed from Corunna on the 16th, from whom I received the following intelligence, viz. that on the 14th inst. four French 74's arrived at that port from San Domingo, under the command of a Rear-Admiral, and brought in with them the Comet, English East Indiaman from London to Bengal, which they had captured off the Western Islands. The French squadron were very sickly, and only half manned.¹ English ships carried in by the French are condemned and sold at Corunna, and French privateers are allowed to arm and fit there, which indulgence was refused the English sloop, as she wished to fit as a privateer there.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

WILLM. FISHER.

P.S.—By a boat from Gibraltar I learnt that Lord Nelson, with 4,000 men, had taken possession of Sicily, the French having 12,000 men at Naples, supposed to be intended for a similar purpose.²

¹ 'July 27, P.M. Fresh breezes, hazy. At two saw the land. Sent a boat on board a Spanish ship standing for Corunna; neared her, and found she was a Spanish seventy-four. Saw lying in Corunna four ships of the French line.'—Journal of the Tonnant.

² The information concerning Nelson's occupation of Sicily was, of course, erroneous; but the danger threatening the island of an invasion by the French greatly preoccupied him at the time. On June 25 he wrote to Elliot: 'Had I only to consider, Is Sicily safe at this moment? I should say, No. But let it be recollected that I am called upon not to entirely lose Naples by my opinion, but to try, with that important object in view, to

INCLOSURE I

CAMPBELL TO CAPTAIN BULLER.

By George Campbell, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the Blue, &c.

L'Aigle, a French line-of-battle ship, having got into Cadiz, and having reason to be convinced, from the information I have received, that the squadron under Rear-Admiral Bedout, expected from San Domingo, is not bound to the Straits, you are, in compliance with the directions contained in the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis's orders to me of the 29th June, 1803, hereby required and directed to cruise with his Majesty's ships Malta and Doris (whose captain has orders to put himself under your command) in the situation most likely to prevent her escaping from that port, and in case of her sailing to do your utmost to take and destroy her.

In the event of your remaining any length of time off Cadiz, you are to consider of the plan most advisable to be adopted for procuring refreshments for the ships under your command, either from Gibraltar or elsewhere.

You are to retain the Doris with you for a month, at the expiration of which, should you not save Sicily.' Major-General Villettes, in command at Malta, was to have 2,000 men in readiness, and on July 26 Nelson wrote to the Queen of Naples that he had represented to the English Government the unhappy position of Naples, and had set forth the necessity of sending troops to assist in the defence of Sicily and to occupy positions on the mainland. At another time, in reference to the fitting of gunboats at Marseilles, he wrote: 'They are to go alongshore to the Heel of Italy, and to embark and protect their army either to Sicily or the Morea, or to both; and the navy of Europe can hardly prevent these alongshore voyages.'—*Dispatches and Letters.*

have received further orders, you are to dispatch her with directions to join Admiral Cornwallis off Ushant, or wherever else he may be with the fleet, transmitting him an account of your proceedings.

Should you dispatch the Doris to England while you remain on this station, you are previously to make use of her in providing the Malta with any supplies she may require to enable her to continue on the service with which you are entrusted until you are relieved, in the prosecution of which, should you find it absolutely necessary, you are to employ the Bittern sloop, one of Lord Nelson's squadron, cruising off the entrance of the Straits, or any other of his Majesty's ships, taking care not to interfere with any more material service. You will from time to time transmit an account of your proceedings to the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis and the Secretary of the Admiralty, by the way of Faro, through the medium of Governor O'Connell to the British Minister at Lisbon, or by any other convenient opportunity that may occur, as also any information to Lord Nelson you may judge worthy of his notice.

Given, &c., Canopus, at Sea, 26th July, 1803.

No. 79

CAPTAIN FLEEMING TO CORNWALLIS

Egyptienne, at Sea, 27th July, 1803.

Sir,—I beg you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I captured this day, in lat. 43° N., and long. 25° W., the French man-of-war brig l'Epervier, of sixteen guns

and ninety men, bound from Guadeloupe to Lorient with dispatches.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

C. E. FLEEMING.¹

No. 80

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Corunna, 28th July, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inclose a duplicate of my letter of the 12th instant,² sent by the Thunderer, in case any circumstance should have arisen to prevent her joining your flag. It was not till yesterday I was able to gain so much easting as allowed me to reach Cape Prior, the wind having continually hung in that quarter.

On discovering the land we also discovered a Spanish ship of the line running for Corunna, which I chased, but could not speak before she got her anchorage; but, in standing very close after her, we discovered five ships at anchor under French colours.

I do not know if the arrival of those ships has been reported to you, but having fallen in with the letter of marque *Atalanta*, cutter of Dartmouth, I have considered it of such importance as to desire her commander to proceed with an intelligent young man (Mr. Wise) immediately to the fleet; and, instead of proceeding off Rochefort, I have thought it more consonant with your wishes that I should wait here your further directions.

I shall place myself in easterly winds between Cape Ortegal and Corunna, frequently looking in,

¹ Captain Fleeming communicated this intelligence also to Sir Evan Nepean (see No. 88, p. 109). It had been stated that Jerome Bonaparte was on board, but Captain Fleeming appears to have thrown doubt on this.

² See No. 59, p. 70.

and, in westerly winds, upon the former rendezvous to wait your dispatches, generally in sight of Cape Ortegal.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 81

CAPTAIN PROWSE TO CORNWALLIS

Sirius, at Sea, 28th July, 1803.

Sir,—It is with great concern I have to acquaint you that yesterday, in company with his Majesty's ship *Boadicea*, working up between Bertheaume and Camaret Bays, with a moderate breeze, the ships about three cables' length distance, when the *Sirius*' situation requiring her to be tacked, and having stern way, when the main topsail was hauled, the *Boadicea* standing under her stern, with a strong weather tide, which set her on board the *Sirius*, although her helm was put a-weather, and her mizen topsail was shivered. I am exceedingly sorry to state that, from this unfortunate accident, his Majesty's ship under my command had her rudder broken off about five feet from its head and entirely torn from the stern-post, part of the quarter galleries and the upper part of the stern frame materially damaged. I have now, with the assistance of Captain Winthrop's carpenters, got a temporary rudder hung, which I believe will answer very well, and shall want no more assistance of the *Ardent* to proceed any further. Agreeably to Rear-Admiral Collingwood's signal, I shall proceed without a moment's loss of time to Plymouth.

I am, &c.,

WM. PROWSE.

¹ On August 1 the *Culloden* was ordered to join Pellew off Corunna.

No. 82

CAPTAIN HAMOND TO CORNWALLIS

Plantagenet, at Sea, 30th July, 1803.

Sir,—At noon on the 27th instant I fell in with his Majesty's sloop Rosario in chase of an enemy's vessel. The Rosario by four o'clock had gained on the chase so much as to be within gun-shot, when her fore-topmast being carried away by the great press of sail upon it, she dropped astern.

By eight o'clock the Plantagenet had got close alongside the chase, when she struck her colours. I found her to be the French ship-privateer l'Atalante, of Bordeaux, commanded by M. Arnaud Martin, with a complement of 120 men, and pierced for twenty-two guns, but having only fourteen six-pounders mounted, the remainder having been thrown overboard during the chase.

L'Atalante is an exceeding handsome vessel, coppered, and sails remarkably fast, having run us nearly ninety miles in eight hours. She was out six days from Bordeaux, and had taken nothing.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GRAHAM E. HAMOND.

No. 83

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

An account of ships and vessels captured, &c., by his Majesty's squadron under my command, and reported to me since my last dated the 12th ultimo. (A précis of the table.)

[The Thunderer took a French brig, and an English ship (Jamaica to London) which were sent

into Plymouth, and a French schooner, sent to Guernsey. The *Endymion* took two French brigs and a ship. The *Thunderer* captured a French ship-privateer, and the *Plantagenet* a French brig and a ship, all sent into Plymouth.]

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 1st August, 1803.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 84

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 1st August, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Sir Edward Pellew, upon his return off Cape Ortegal, the 27th of last month, informs me he chased a Spanish ship of the line into Corunna, and soon learnt that the French squadron from the West Indies were there ; and, falling in with the *Atalanta*, letter of marque belonging to Dartmouth, he put a midshipman on board, and sent her to me with the account, as he did not know that I had before received information of those ships having arrived at that port. He informs me of his intention to wait for further direction, and reports the French ships to be in a very sickly state. I immediately sent the *Culloden*, which is the last of the two-deck ships from Plymouth, to join Sir Edward Pellew.

I had before by the *Naiad* directed Sir Robert Calder, keeping a good look-out as he went along the coast, to obtain what information he could in his way off Corunna, and he will, according to the orders he before received, leave the *Spartiate* with him (Sir E. Pellew) and return to me with the *Prince of Wales* and *Dreadnought*, which latter ship I will send in to replenish ; and I have directed Sir Edward

Pellew to send the Mars, when he judges she can be spared, to refresh the men, replenish the provisions and stores, then to join me according to their Lordships' direction signified in your letter dated the 14th ultimo.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 85

CAMPBELL TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Canopus, Gibraltar Bay, 3rd August, 1803.

Sir, — By my letter to you of July 28 my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will be informed of my proceedings up to that day, and I have now to acquaint you, for their Lordships' information, that I arrived in this Bay on July 30, where I found his Majesty's ship *Triumph*, she having got in a new bowsprit, &c., and will be ready for sea to-morrow or the day after.

The convoy from England, under the protection of the *Seahorse* and *Arrow*, arrived here yesterday, and I have given directions to Captain Sir Robert Barlow to take the *Prévoyante* storeship and two coppered victuallers to Lord Nelson off Toulon. I completed the *Canopus* to six months previous to the convoy's arriving; and shall carry as much wine as she can possibly stow, with some sails and spars, and have likewise ordered the *Triumph* to do the same.

I have given the Honourable Captain Boyle, of the *Seahorse*, directions to take the *Arrow* under his orders and proceed, with three victuallers, an ordnance storeship, and the trade, up the Mediterranean as far as Malta; and I shall proceed myself in the *Canopus* to join Lord Nelson off Toulon this

evening or to-morrow morning, as I understand from Captain Sir Robert Barlow that line-of-battle ships are much wanted off that place.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. CAMPBELL.

No. 86

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 4th August, 1803.

Sir,—In answer to your letter of the 25th ultimo,¹ relative to the Thunderer having captured a French vessel in lat. 44° N., long. 16° W., sent by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I beg to observe the Thunderer is now in port to replenish. I detached Captain Bedford off Lorient for a week once before, and he returned exactly to the time, which circumstance, added to the ship being thought the best sailer of the two-deck ships, induced me to detach him occasionally upon such service. The Plantagenet, being a very deceiving ship, without a poop, I thought, when a two-deck ship could be spared for a few days, might, in the place of a smaller ship, have a chance of checking the depredations of the enemy's cruisers.

I expect Sir Robert Calder will join me again very soon, according to his orders, upon the return of Sir Edward Pellew to his station; and I shall keep the three-deck ships together and the two-deck ships inshore, as they have been for some time past, and watch as strictly as possible any attempt the enemy may make to put to sea, according to the instructions contained in your letter

¹ See No. 72, p. 82.

marked secret, dated the 27th ultimo, and the caution therein mentioned by direction of their Lordships in regard to Ireland.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 87

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 4th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have received your two letters dated the 26th of last month, written by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, with an extract of a letter from Rear-Admiral Sir John Thomas Duckworth, Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's ships at Jamaica, relative to the convoy appointed to sail from that island for England on the 15th of June last, together with a copy of the private signals to be used in their passage.¹

You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships I shall attend thereto. I have also your letter with its inclosures, containing intelligence of the sailing of three French ships of the line from San Domingo for Toulon on the 20th of May, and of several gun vessels and flat boats fitting at Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 88

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

6th August, 1803.

Sir,—I send you herewith by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty a copy of a

¹ See No. 75, p. 83.

letter I have received from the Honourable Captain Fleeming of the *Egyptienne*, stating the capture of the Republican sloop of war *l'Epervier*, from Guadeloupe to Lorient, lately commanded by Jerome Bonaparte.¹ Notwithstanding what is stated by Captain Fleeming, their Lordships strongly suspect that Captain Bonaparte was on board that sloop at the time of her capture, and, in the event of the *Egyptienne* joining the squadron under your orders, it is their Lordships' directions that you cause a very minute inquiry to be made as to the circumstances and time he is stated to have left her, examining separately such officers and men as may be on board that ship belonging to the *Epervier*, and to report to me the result for their Lordships' information.

I am, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

[On August 15 Cornwallis promised to have diligent inquiry made among the people found in the *Epervier*, when the *Egyptienne* joined, with the view of discovering if Jerome Bonaparte was concealed among the prisoners. It was afterwards said that he had sailed in the American vessel *President*.]

No. 89

A Journal of the proceedings of H.M. ship Thunderer, commencing June 28th and ending July 30th, 1803.

[It had been reported to the Admiralty that the *Thunderer* had taken a French brig in 44° N. lat. and 16° W. long., when Cornwallis had stated her to be off Lorient. The Admiralty desired an ex-

¹ I have not come across this letter, but see No. 79, p. 102.

planation, and Cornwallis remarked that the latitude given seemed not very correct, while he was probably in error in returning her as immediately off the port. 'It has frequently happened that, from the easterly winds, ships have not been able to return exactly to the prescribed time.' The Ardent had been ten days absent in May, and the Minotaur, ordered to see the captured French frigate Franchise into port, had stood to the westward and put into Cawsand Bay without rejoining. Other ships had separated in chase, or during thick weather. 'But I shall take all possible care to keep them together.' The Journal was forwarded on August 7 for the information of the Admiralty, and illustrates the work of the squadron. See Nos. 72 and 86.]

June 28.—Moderate breezes and clear. Half-past ten, filled and made sail to get our men out of Admiral Campbell's squadron. Ushant at noon S.E. 10 miles—lost sight of the fleet.

29th.—Light airs and clear. Standing off and on, with the inshore squadron boats employed getting our men and stores; at 4 P.M. made sail, Ushant N. by E. 5 leagues; at seven passed the Diamond; at 10 A.M. exercised great guns. Lat. observed, $46^{\circ} 13' N.$

30th.—Steady breezes and clear weather. Not a sail seen for the last forty-eight hours. Lat., $45^{\circ} 40' N.$

July 1.—Steady breezes and clear. Made sail in chase of a cutter; at 9 P.M. hazy, lost sight of the chase; at half-past five made sail to the southward in chase of a ship; answered the private signal and exchanged numbers with the Acasta; answered the Acasta's signal for a sail south; made all sail in chase. Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 21' N.$

2nd.—Light airs and calms. Still in chase. At

4 P.M., sent the cutter manned and armed after the chase; at 6.30 A.M. the cutter returned. The chase proved to be a brig under American colours from Ferrol, bound to Bordeaux; at noon made all sail in chase to the westward. Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 15' N$.

3rd.—Light breezes and hazy. Several sail in sight; examined a Spanish brig from the Havana bound to Santander; at eight in chase of a ship and a brig in the S.E. quarter. At eleven perceived a vessel to haul upon a wind athwart us in studding sails, and hauled our wind after her; she proved to be the *Æolus* cutter, privateer of Jersey. She had seen neither of our chase, but two ships of war had passed her about two hours before, steering to the E.N.E. 3.30 A.M., five ships of war in sight; prepared for making sail and battle; made the private signal and our number, which was answered by the *Canopus*, bearing a blue flag at the mizen; made signal 122 with the interrogatory pennant, which was answered in the affirmative; made sail to the northward; spoke a Swedish brig from Gothenburg bound to Gibraltar; performed divine service, and mustered the ship's company. Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 31' N$.

4th.—Light breezes and hazy. Made all sail in chase to the S.W.; at midnight examined a ship from Lisbon bound to Hamburg; at half-past six made sail in chase of a lugger and schooner endeavouring to get to windward of us; fired several shot at her. At noon still in chase. Lat., $44^{\circ} 45' N$.

5th.—Light airs and cloudy. Still in chase, continuing to fire on her as she crossed us. At five sent our boats manned and armed; at six the chase hoisted English over French colours. She proved to be the French National schooner *L'Egérie*, prize to the Alarm lugger of Guernsey; she supposed us to be a French ship of war. During the chase we

were joined by the Anne and Maria privateer-brig, who gave me every assistance. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 09' N$.

6th.—Fresh breezes and clear. Made all sail to get on my station ; at six spoke the Apollo with two prizes. Captain Dickson informed me that the prize he had taken had spoken a French ship in the morning bound to Havre de Grace, and he recommended my steering to the westward in search of her. He learnt from the prizes he had taken that several National corvettes were cruising to the westward to apprise the merchant vessels of the war, with orders for them to proceed to the Spanish ports. At midnight a brig in sight ; bore up in chase of her ; at half-past two sent two officers and eleven men on board les Deux Amis from Martinique, bound to Havre de Grace, laden with coffee, sugar, and cotton. An Englishman belonging to her assured me that there were not less than eighteen vessels ready to sail from Martinique, and more from Guadeloupe, and that they had passed a large ship the evening before. Made sail ; at four saw two luggers, a ship, a brig, a cutter, a schooner, and *chasse-marée* ; at seven examined the ship ; she proved to be l'Amitié from Guadeloupe, bound to Havre, prize to the Resolution lugger of Fowey ; the other lugger, the Venus of Jersey ; made all sail in chase of the brig. At half-past eleven, nearly calm ; sent the boats manned and armed in chase. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 09'$.

7th.—Light airs, inclinable to calm. Still in chase of a brig. At 1 P.M. sent the boats manned and armed in chase ; at six they came up with the Anne and Maria, privateer. The captain informed the officer that he had intelligence from a Spanish vessel he boarded of four ships and a brig being seen in the N.W., which he had every reason to think were

French. At 4 A.M. made all sail in chase of a lugger, which we soon after discovered to be in chase of a ship. At eleven spoke an American ship from Amsterdam bound to New York. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 67'$ N.

8th.—Light breezes and clear. Still in chase of the lugger, which had every appearance of being French. Saw a ship and schooner engaging two luggers. About four o'clock the ship and schooner brought to; hoisted our colours and fired several guns, which they paid no attention to. Tacked occasionally. At eleven came up with the chase, and found her to be the Naiad, Captain Roberts, from Jamaica bound to London, loaded with sugar and rum, captured by the Macklain [*sic*], French schooner, on the evening of the 4th inst., and recaptured at the time above mentioned by the Tartar and Venus luggers. Took possession of the ship, and sent an officer and eleven men on board of her (and impressed an equal number) to navigate her to Plymouth. From the recaptured Englishmen we learn that the schooner had taken five other valuable ships, and had the day before spoken a brig captured by the Blonde privateer, belonging to Bordeaux, which ship, with several other privateers and corvettes, was cruising from two to three degrees further to the westward to inform all French vessels to proceed to Spain, where their prize has also orders to proceed. The day before the ship was recaptured she had been chased by four frigates and a cutter; the Englishmen thought them French. At 4 A.M. passed several vessels under convoy of the Lapwing and Falcon; exchanged signals. At eight fresh breezes and cloudy, with a heavy swell from the N.E. Kept to the S.W. of the convoy, and made sail in search of the French cruisers. At noon fresh breezes and clear. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 38'$ N.

9th.—Fresh breezes and clear. At six examined an American brig from New York bound to Bordeaux ; at eleven examined the American ship, John, from Liverpool, bound to Charleston. At four examined a Swedish ship from Alicante bound to Stockholm. At noon, calm. Lat., $44^{\circ} 21' N$.

10th.—Light airs, inclinable to calm. A strange sail in sight to the southward, all sail set in chase. Half-past eleven examined an American ship from Lisbon, bound to Falmouth. She informed us that the English ship Jamaica from Jamaica, bound to London, had been taken yesterday morning by a French schooner-privateer, and being chased by an English privateer the Frenchman had burnt her. Bore up in chase. Mustered the ship's company and performed divine service. Lat., $43^{\circ} 31' N$.

11th.—Light airs and clear. At one examined an English brig, the William and Hanna, from Moga-dor bound to Hull ; made sail in chase. Lat. observed, $43^{\circ} 36' N$.

12th.—Light breezes and clear. Examined an American brig from Lisbon bound to Gothenburg ; made sail in chase. At 4 A.M. examined a Spanish brig from Malaga bound to Petersburg. Soon after saw a ship apparently in chase of us ; made sail, the chase in great confusion wetting his sails. Lat. observed, $43^{\circ} 40' N$.

13th.—Light airs and clear. Two ships of war apparently in chase of us ; fired several shots at the chase. At two answered the private signal made by the Tonnant and Mars. At three examined the chase ; she proved to be the armed ship Irlim, of and from Liverpool, bound to Barbados ; impressed two men from her. At seven made sail in chase of a brig to the eastward ; Tonnant and Mars in chase to the northward. At midnight lost sight of the chase. At noon dull weather ; a cutter in sight to windward.

Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 35'$ N. The master of the Irlim stated that the day before he had spoken a Danish ship, prize to the John Bull, privateer, that previous to her being captured had been examined by two French frigates in long. $20^{\circ} 0'$, lat. $44^{\circ} 30'$.

14th.—Steady breezes and clear. Made all sail in chase of two luggers. At five passed the Newfoundland convoy. Exercised great guns. Lat. observed, $46^{\circ} 51'$ N.

15th.—Fresh breezes and hazy. Made the private signal to the Egyptienne. At half-past three were in chase of a brig, and made the signal to the Egyptienne of her being suspicious. At half-past eight lost sight of the chase. Lat. observed, $47^{\circ} 30'$ N.

16th.—Moderate breezes and hazy. Tacked occasionally, endeavouring to gain our station. At noon a brig standing towards us. Lat. observed, $47^{\circ} 11'$ N.

17th.—Light airs and hazy weather. Examined a brig from Bremen bound to Charleston. Saw a cutter in the S.W.; mustered the ship's company at divisions, and performed divine service; tacked occasionally to get to the eastward. Lat. observed, $46^{\circ} 11'$ N.

18th.—Light airs, inclinable to calm. Employed cleaning the cable-tiers, and new stocking the best bower anchor, using every exertion to regain our station. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 24'$ N.

19th.—Moderate breezes and clear. At half-past six tacked in chase of an armed brig; at nine examined the chase. She proved to be the Hero, brig-privateer, of Guernsey; impressed three men from her, and made sail. At 4 A.M. a cutter in sight to windward. Exercised the seamen and marines at small arms. Lat., $45^{\circ} 16'$ N.

20th.—Moderate breezes and hazy. Several

privateers in sight ; 7.30 A.M. a large ship in sight standing to the northward. At noon in chase of the ship, supposed to be a Dutch East Indiaman. A brig in sight steering to the S.W. Lat., $44^{\circ} 32' N$.

21st.—Light airs and variable. Hoisted our colours to the stranger, which he took no notice of. At two hoisted Spanish ; the chase did the same with a broad pennant ; hauled down the Spanish and hoisted English colours ; cleared ship for action, the chase making all sail from us ; tacked occasionally. At half-past seven hoisted a white flag forward and fired a gun ; during the night lost sight of the chase. At daylight the chase in sight about eight miles to windward. At noon continuing the chase. Tacked occasionally. Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 24' N$.

22nd.—Light airs and variable. Still in chase. At half-past five came up with the San Julian, Spanish 64-gun ship,¹ Commodore Don José de Vargas, from Cadiz bound to Ferrol, with convicts, copper, and money ; had been out twenty-three days. Her guns were pointed at us, and she appeared well prepared for battle ; an officer assured me on his honour she was bound to Ferrol. At noon carrying a press of sail to join the fleet. Lat. observed, $43^{\circ} 43' N$.

23rd.—Fresh breezes and squally. Lost sight of the Spanish [ship] ; a barque in sight to the northward ; at half-past three examined her ; she proved to be a Swede from Alicante, bound to Stockholm. Lat. observed, $44^{\circ} 55' N$.

24th.—Fresh breezes and hazy. At two passed a Swedish brig, at five a cutter in the N.W. quarter. Performed divine service, and mustered

¹ Marliani, *Combate de Trafalgar*, says the San Julian was a 58-gun ship built at Cartagena in 1781. Don José de Vargas was in command of the San Ildefonso, 74, at Trafalgar, and was wounded in the battle.

the ship's company at divisions ; at noon, steady breezes and cloudy. Lat. observed, $46^{\circ} 10' N$.

25th.—Fresh breezes and cloudy. Three cruisers in sight. Lat. observed, $45^{\circ} 41' N$.

26th.—Fresh breezes and clear weather. A ship in sight to leeward, apparently in chase of us. At eight shortened sail for the chase to close. At eleven tacked and stood towards the stranger ; hailed him, repeated, and ordered him to shorten sail, and told him that we were a ship of war of seventy-four guns, on which he asked if we were English. On my answering him 'Yes,' he gave us his broadside, which cut away a few ropes. We fired at him, without effect, both great guns and small arms. He hauled his wind to the northward and made all sail ; at half-past three commenced firing our bow guns, which the ship returned ; at half-past four close up with the chase, and orders given to fire a broadside ; at the moment he struck his colours. She proved to be the *Vénus* of Bordeaux, pierced for twenty-eight guns, carrying sixteen long six-pounders, and two eight-pound carronades, 150 men, commanded by Mons. Lemperrière ; sailed on the evening of the 21st instant in company with *la Bellone*, *la Muse*, a ship of fourteen guns, a ketch, and a brig. Quite a new vessel, sails remarkably fast, and is well found in everything. Lat. observed, $46^{\circ} 03' N$.

27th.—Fresh breezes and clear. Made all sail (the prize in company) to join the fleet ; at noon calm. Lat. observed, $47^{\circ} 15' N$.

28th.—Light airs and clear. At 10 P.M. the wind S.S.W. ; carrying a press of sail to join the fleet, the prize nearly out of sight astern. Lat. observed, $47^{\circ} 43' N$.

29th.—Fresh breezes and hazy. Half-past seven spoke a Prussian ship from Bremen, bound to Ferrol ; at eight wore ship and stood to the

N.W., supposing myself about eight leagues from Ushant; at two bore up, but soon after, coming very thick and blowing strong from the S.W., shortened sail; at 8 A.M. came to the wind; at noon sounded in sixty-three fathoms. Lat. per account, $48^{\circ} 33' N.$, long. $5^{\circ} 14' W.$

30th.—Fresh breezes, with heavy rain. At half-past twelve wore and stood to the S.E., prize in company; at six saw a line-of-battle ship and a frigate. Ushant S.E. five or six miles; at eight heavy rain, nearly calm; at 4 A.M. deeper water; at six saw the admiral; made the private signal and number.

W. BEDFORD.

No. 90

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 9th August, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty I have received their order, dated the 29th of last month, to take the ships named in the margin¹ under my command; and I have to acknowledge the receipt of their Lordships' orders (with his Majesty's two additional instructions) directing that vessels belonging to any State in amity with his Majesty are not to be detained or molested on account of their having on board any organzine, thrown, and raw silk, the growth and produce of Italy, coming consigned to any merchant of the United Kingdom; or to seize (under the provisions therein mentioned) any neutral vessel which shall be carrying on trade directly between the colonies of the enemy and the neutral country to which the vessel belongs, and

¹ Impétueux, Spencer, Majestic, Colossus, Defiance.

laden with the property of inhabitants of such neutral country.

I shall issue the said order and instructions to his Majesty's ships and vessels under my command, and pay the strictest regard and attention thereto.

I have the honour to be, &c.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 91

*COLLINGWOOD TO MR. J. E. BLACKETT*¹

Venerable, off Brest, 9th August, 1803.

I am lying off the entrance of Brest harbour to watch the motions of the French fleet. Our information respecting them is very vague, but we know they have four- or five-and-twenty great ships, which makes it necessary to be alert and keep our eyes open at all times. I therefore bid adieu to snug beds and comfortable naps at night, never lying down but in my clothes. . . . We hear no news here, and cannot be in more complete seclusion from the world, with only one object in view—that of preventing the French from doing harm.

The Admiral sends all the ships to me, and cruises off Ushant by himself. But with a westerly wind it is impossible with one squadron to prevent ships getting into Brest harbour; for it has two entrances very distant from each other, one to the south of the Saints, but which off Ushant, where we are, is entirely out of view. I take the utmost pains to prevent all access, and an anxious time I have of it, what with tides and rocks, which have more of danger in them than a battle once a week. . . .

¹ Newnham Collingwood's *Life of Collingwood*, 3rd edit. p. 91.

No. 92

CORNWALLIS TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

You are hereby ordered and directed, with the ships now upon that service, or any others I may send to you, to cruise with the utmost vigilance off Ferrol, for the purpose of watching the proceedings of the enemy's ships at that place and Corunna, using your best endeavours to intercept them should they attempt to put to sea; and endeavour to gain intelligence, which you are to communicate to me at every opportunity, as well as your proceedings.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, off Ushant,

11th August, 1803,

W. CORNWALLIS.

[On the same day Sir Edward Pellew (Tonant), Captain Sutton (Mars), and Captain Dacres (Culloden), were instructed to follow the orders of Sir Robert Calder. Confirming his order of this date, Cornwallis wrote to Calder on August 31st, instructing him to take the Colossus, Spencer, Culloden, and Sirius, under his orders.]

No. 93

CORNWALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 13th August, 1803.

Sir,—The ships with you are for the purpose of watching the port of Brest. Therefore you are certainly at liberty occasionally to station any of

them at the particular points, as you may judge best, according to circumstances of wind, &c., to prevent as much as possible any ship or vessel from getting out of or into that port.

I shall send the *Sirius* to you the moment she returns, to enable you to go on with the examination.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 94

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

13th August, 1803.

Sir,—The Earl of St. Vincent having laid before the Board a copy of a resolution of the Committee of Directors of the East India Company, appointed to examine into the circumstances relative to the capture of the *Cullands Grove*, East India ship, on her passage from Bencoolen, by a French privateer, on the 22nd of last month (which had been delivered to his Lordship by the Chairman), wherein it is stated that, on the 17th preceding, having reached the latitude of $50^{\circ} 21'$ North and longitude 17° West, an officer of his Majesty's ship *Endymion*, notwithstanding the strong representations made to him by Captain Anderson and the second mate that the said ship was weakly manned and had a very valuable cargo on board, pressed twelve of the stoutest men belonging to her—I am commanded by their Lordships to send you a copy of the resolution above mentioned, and to signify their direction to you to call upon the captain of the *Endymion* to account for his conduct on that occasion, and to transmit what he has to offer in his justification, their Lordships having no doubt that

your instructions to him for the regulation of his conduct, in the execution of the service on which he has been employed, directed him to afford every possible protection to the trade of his Majesty's subjects he might happen to fall in with, instead of distressing it in the manner which is represented to the committee to have been done.¹

I am, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 95

CAPTAIN PAGET TO CORNWALLIS

Endymion, at Sea, 14th August, 1803.

Lat. 48° 30' N., long. 12° West.

Sir,—I have the satisfaction to inform you that le Général Moreau, a very fine French schooner-privateer of sixteen guns and eighty-five men, was this evening captured by his Majesty's ship under my command. Le Général Moreau is a perfectly new vessel, had been out only six days from Bordeaux, and had made no captures.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CHARLES PAGET.

¹ 'Complaints having been made to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that some of the merchant ships have been so much weakened by the King's ships having taken so many men as to distress those ships, you will be pleased to direct the captains of the ships with you to protect and assist the trade of His Majesty's subjects.'—Cornwallis to Calder, Aug. 22, 1803. Capt. Paget's explanation was that he took twelve men out of the East Indiaman thinking them surplus company, and that he was authorised so to press men out of homeward-bound ships.

No. 96

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Minotaur, off Brest, 15th August, 1803.

Sir,—I stood up towards Brest yesterday while the flood ran, and saw distinctly eight men-of-war, six of which were of the line. The other two I took to be frigates, but Captain Maitland, who was very close in, says seven are of the line. The Sirius is gone up, and I hope Captain Prowse will be able to give a very perfect statement of them on his return, though these hot days cause a thick haze, which so distorts the ships that they put on every appearance but their own.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 97

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 15th August, 1803.

Sir,—I acquainted you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, by the Dreadnought, that Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder continued off Corunna, with the ships which had been under the orders of Sir Edward Pellew, and that I had before detached the Culloden to join him, and I shall send the further reinforcement their Lordships have been pleased to direct.

The captains of the ships which have been sent to look into Brest since the change of wind to the eastward report little alteration in the road.

It was calm on Friday evening. In the night the wind came to the eastward, and all Saturday last it

was so thick the ships could not make the land. I was therefore under apprehensions that some of the enemy's ships might have taken the opportunity to escape.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 98

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

17th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have their Lordships' commands to acquaint you that, under the present circumstances, you should keep four sail of the line cruising off Ferrol, and, as the Tonnant has been some time at sea, it appears proper that you should relieve her by some other ship, and send her to Cawsand Bay to replenish and refresh her crew, and having so done and rejoined you, to order Sir Edward Pellew to relieve Sir Robert Calder in the command of the ships employed on that service.

Their Lordships have further commanded me to acquaint you that it appears the enemy's cruisers send their prizes into the French and Spanish ports in the Bay, and that a recent instance has occurred of their continuing to do so by sending the Cullands Grove to Pasages.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 99

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 18th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the

Admiralty, that a lugger was seen within the rocks at Ushant, which had the appearance of an armed vessel. Boats from the *Ville de Paris*, under the direction of Lieutenant Watt, went on the 16th at night and brought her out.

She is called the *Messenger*, pierced for eight guns, has six mounted, with the owner and forty men on board, completely fitted for a two months' cruise.

Lieutenant Watt boarded her with eighteen men in a pinnace before the other boats, which had separated to look out for her, could get up. Only a few Frenchmen were wounded upon making a feeble resistance.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 100

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 18th August, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the *Colossus* joined me on the 15th instant.

Captain Domett has examined the owner and other persons taken on board the *Messenger* lugger very minutely, and it does not appear that any Republican ships or vessels of war have sailed from Brest lately; all the gun-vessels are there, although they have not been seen by our ships since the wind came to the eastward.

A stout armed cutter is very much wanted to be with the inshore ships, the *Pickle* schooner having been constantly on that service.

You were pleased in your letter some time since to signify their Lordships' intention of

sending out to the squadron some armed cutters to keep up a communication with the detached ships.

I have now been obliged to send the lugger which has been taken round the Bay for that purpose.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 101

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Minotaur, off Brest, 18th August, 1803.

Sir,—Since my letter of the 16th by the Nimrod, the ports of Brest and Camaret have been very closely examined by l'Aigle on the evening of the 16th, when the weather was hazy, and by the Pickle this morning at daylight, when it was very clear, and objects seen distinctly, so that I believe every vessel in the ports is enumerated in the Pickle's list, a copy of which I enclose.

I mentioned in my last that I had sent the schooner down to take a boat off the Saints, and yesterday he brought one up with five men in her, from whom I learnt that no ship had passed through the Raz during the westerly wind, nor any vessel, except a small convoy of *chasse-marées* in the beginning of the month. From the above observations made by the officers, and the accounts received by the fishermen, it is pretty evident that no vessels of magnitude have left the port lately, but the lugger-rigged and ketch gun-vessels are undoubtedly gone.¹

The ship which had generally been reckoned

¹ Nine gun-vessels received orders to leave Brest about August 4 for Boulogne, and lay in the small harbours of the vicinity awaiting an opportunity to escape.

of the line in other accounts, Lieutenant Lapenotière says he ascertained clearly to be a single-decked ship, very large—perhaps one of those rebuilt ships like the *Egyptienne*.

There seems to be an augmentation of land forces to have lately arrived at Brest, as Captain Wolfe observed all the batteries and neighbourhood of them to be crowded with men, and they are rather more liberal of their shot than formerly, firing at the boats from places that have hitherto been silent.

On the 16th a large rowing twenty-oars came down from Brest, in which Captain Wolfe could discover six or eight officers. They landed at St. Matthew's Point, where he saw them for a considerable time observing with glasses the squadron lying here. This circumstance, the increase of troops which he observed, and the number of brigs in Camaret, leads me to suspect that an embarkation is about to take place. With an easterly wind they cannot well move without discovery. A north-west wind is against their getting to Ireland, yet I think it is with it they will probably attempt to escape by the Passage du Raz.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 102

*DECRÈS TO CAFFARELLI*¹

Paris, 1^{er} fructidor, an XI (19th August, 1803).

Je m'empresse de vous transmettre, Citoyen Préfet, des ordres que je viens de recevoir du Premier Consul, et qu'il m'a ordonné de vous transmettre explicitement.

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB², 84, f. 288.

Son intention est : 1^o Que le Vengeur soit mis à l'eau le 1^{er} vendémiaire (Sept. 24), jour de la fête de la République, et à Lorient, ainsi qu'à Rochefort, cette époque sera solennisée par le lancement de plusieurs vaisseaux. 2^o Que l'armée navale de Brest soit portée, pour le 1^{er} frimaire (November 23), à 20 vaisseaux, dont trois à trois ponts, y compris le Vengeur. Pour exécuter cet ordre, il faudrait donc presser et compléter l'armement des vaisseaux le Foudroyant, l'Impétueux, l'Eole, l'Ulysse, l'Alexandre, le Conquérant, le Diomède, le Jean-Bart, le Vétéran ; accélérer l'achèvement du vaisseau le Casard ; presser les réparations des vaisseaux le Watignies, le Tourville, le Desaix, le Jupiter, le Batave, l'Aquilon ; faire réparer sans délai les vaisseaux l'Océan et le Republicain, qui des quatre vaisseaux à trois ponts existants à Brest paraissent être ceux qui sont en moins mauvais état ; enfin joindre à ces dix-neuf bâtiments un des vaisseaux le Finistère, l'Alliance, le Patriote, le Brave, le Gaulois et le Zélé ; 3^o Le Premier Consul désire aussi, indépendamment de ces vingt vaisseaux, qu'il considère comme devant être propres à toutes sortes d'expéditions, et qui doivent être prêts pour le 1^{er} frimaire, que quatre ou cinq vaisseaux puissent être armés complètement, c'est-à-dire porter toute leur artillerie ; mais il suffirait que ces quatre ou cinq vaisseaux fussent en état de faire une campagne d'environ deux mois.

Ainsi, d'après ces ordres, tous les vaisseaux de Brest, sans exception, doivent être armés.

4^o 32,000 hommes doivent être embarqués, tant sur les vingt vaisseaux que sur les frégates, flûtes, et corvettes armées au port de Brest. Les bâtiments ci-après pourront recevoir cette destination : la frégate la Valeureuse, la corvette l'Indienne, la Félicité, les flûtes la Salamandre, la Nécessité, les corvettes le Festin, le Vulcain, la Société.

J'ai lieu de croire, en admettant que les vingt vaisseaux seront prêts, que les vingt-neuf bâtimens pourront recevoir plus de 14,000 hommes de troupes passagères, et vous aurez à affréter, pour l'embarquement des 18,000 hommes restants, des navires de transport dans les ports de votre préfecture ou dans ceux des arrondissemens voisins.

Les vivres d'embarquement pour les troupes passagères devront être calculés sur le pied de trois mois de subsistances et de deux mois d'eau.

[A later order, of August 23, instructed the Prefect that, instead of 32,000 men, there were to be embarked at Brest 20,000, and 500 horses. On November 3 the order was repeated that the squadron should consist of twenty vessels, admitting that the four others to be chosen from among those remaining at Brest were not ready. These last were to be ready by January 11, 1804, at the latest, as well as the whole squadron. The Minister could not admit the supposition of delay. The frigates, corvettes, and *flûtes armées* were to join the other vessels, and to embark as many troops as they could carry ; and ships of commerce were to be taken for the transport of 3,000 men and 1,500 (or at least 1,000) horses, in addition to those conveyed by the squadron. Like instructions were issued to the naval prefects at Lorient and Rochefort. At the former port the Suffren and Algéciras were to be launched, one in the course of Fructidor (Aug.-Sept. 1803) and the other on the 1st Vendémiaire (Sept. 24). In order to expedite the Suffren, the Infatigable, and the Jemmapes, the work upon the Hermione was to be stopped, since she could not be ready for service on December 22. The Suffren and Jemmapes and the frigate Infatigable were to proceed to the Ile d'Aix as soon as possible, and leave before that date. At Rochefort the ships to be

launched at the same dates were the Lion and the Magnanime. The Prefect was instructed (Aug. 19, 1803) that it was the intention to embark 10,000 men in the war ships. 'While admitting that the ships at Corunna and Pasages, or Lorient and Nantes, may later on join those of Rochefort, I calculate approximately that you will have to supply the insufficiency of the war ships by chartering transports, capable of carrying about 7,000 men.' Rations were to be supplied for three months and water for two. Again, on November 3 instructions were sent that transports were to be found at the Ile d'Aix for 2,000 men and 500 horses, similarly provisioned, to be ready to sail on the 1st Pluviôse (Jan. 22, 1804).—*Arch. de la Marine*, BB², 84, ff. 292, 369; 86, f. 88; 95, f. 191.]

No. 103

CAPTAIN PROWSE TO CORNWALLIS

Sirius, off Bordeaux, 20th August, 1803.

Sir,—Having this day fallen in with his Majesty's ship Diamond, off Bordeaux, and being informed by Captain Elphinstone that his cruise is out on Thursday next, I embrace this opportunity of informing you that, agreeably to your orders of the 16th instant, I proceeded, as therein directed, by passing through the Bec du Raz. On opening the point of Audierne Bay I perceived a gun brig and several *chasse-marées*, which escaped into Audierne Harbour. I then made sail, coasting inshore, and on the 17th instant, in the evening, had a close look in between Ile de Groix and the main, and observed in the harbour of Port Louis a line-of-battle ship, with the mainmast out and sheers up, fore and mizen topmasts struck, with a flag at the mizen; one

frigate, two brigs, and a schooner, apparently ready for sea. At this time I decoyed a small open fishing boat, out of which I took a man and a boy, whose information corresponded with the above observations, and that two line-of-battle ships are building, one near ready to launch. I then proceeded close along shore, and the following day chased a schooner-privateer between the Ile de Ré and the main, which escaped by getting into shoal water. At noon I stood well in, and looked into Rochefort, saw nothing lying at the Isle d'Aix, which leads me to suppose that the frigate and brig which I saw when last reconnoitring have sailed. I shall now proceed agreeably to your orders.

I am, &c.,

WM. PROWSE.¹

No. 104

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd August, 1803.

Sir,—I have received your letter, dated the 18th instant, acquainting me, by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the Leeward Islands convoy, under the protection of the Venus and Busy, was appointed to sail from Tortola on the 31st of last month, and signifying their Lordships' desire that the cruisers under my orders were

¹ Captain Prowse's orders, August 16, were to see if any of the enemy's vessels had passed by way of the Saints, then to look into Lorient, particularly to ascertain if the French line-of-battle ship said to be refitting was still there, afterwards proceeding along the coast to observe Rochefort, and other French ports, and then to join Sir Robert Calder off Ferrol. It appears from the ship's log that he witnessed from a distance the action of September 2nd, between the Culloden and the French ships Duguay-Trouin and Guerrière. On August 19 the Royal Sovereign was ordered to join Calder's flag. The Boadicea followed the Sirius on a cruise of observation.

directed to look out for, and afford any protection or assistance to, the said convoy, which the circumstances may be found to require.

I have sent by this conveyance a distribution of the force placed by their Lordships under my command, by which it will appear that four frigates and a sloop are now upon that service.

The *Boadicea* I shall be obliged to send to Plymouth to replenish from the inshore squadron, which will then only leave one frigate attached to it.

The *Diamond* and *Naiad* have been a considerable time out, and will, when they join me, require to be sent in for the like purpose. Three ships are gone to Sir Robert Calder, which will enable me to send to Cawsand Bay the three ships which have been longest out with Sir Edward Pellew, and I shall take care to attend to their Lordships' directions, contained in your letter dated the 17th instant, upon the Tonnant's joining me from Cawsand Bay.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 105

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Cape Prior, 24th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to transmit you copies of a correspondence between Captain James Wallis, of his Majesty's ship *Naiad*, and the Captain-General of the Province of Galicia, resident at Corunna, and my order to Captain Wallis for proceeding to that port to water, upon assurance before given by the Captain-General of his readiness to furnish the necessaries that ship stood in need of.

I am happy to inform you that this correspondence, although a little awkward at first, terminated at last amicably, the Governor expressing his concern

that he could not permit the officers to come on shore, and excusing himself of any intended disrespect.¹ The motives I acted upon were two ; the first, to obtain a direct and digested account of the proceedings of the French squadron and their probable objects ; the other, to enable me to supply the Mars with water, so as to retain her on her station as long as her provisions lasted. In this particular I have failed, the frigate getting only thirty tons ; and I do not think, after what passed, and the manifest influence the French officers have over the Captain-General, that he will allow of the Naiad's watering again. On the former part we were more successful, and understand that positive orders have been received from Madrid not only to equip the whole of the Spanish fleet at Ferrol, but to refit in every particular the French squadron, and to allow them to impress all Frenchmen in their ports to complete their complements. We learn, however, by the same means that the arsenal is extremely low in every department, and it is said they have

¹ I have not thought it necessary to give this particular correspondence. The Captain-General's reason for objecting to the officers' going ashore was on the ground of health. He had been incorrectly informed that the Naiad had captured vessels coming from San Domingo, where an epidemic was raging, and had received orders from the Court to enforce a quarantine upon all ships from the West Indies. Captain Wallis said his officers had been grossly insulted on shore, and wrote to the Captain-General : 'I hope sincerely your Excellency's conduct on this occasion may not lead to consequences of the most serious nature.' There was also a dispute in regard to the salute. The Captain-General had orders to treat all men-of-war of nations in amity with his Catholic Majesty as Spanish vessels were treated ; but there were late treaties with France and Russia which provided for a gun-for-gun salute in the case of ships of those Powers. He was ready to return the Naiad's salute with two guns less. Captain Wallis replied that he regretted the circumstance, but that his express instructions were that he should salute no flag without the certainty of the salute being returned with an equal number of guns.

not stores sufficient to complete the French ships alone.

On the 19th I was joined by the *Colossus*, and on the 21st by the *Spencer*; she brought us a supply of French beef—a small quantity had been procured by the *Naiad* from *Corunna*. Yesterday I was joined by the *Sirius*; I cover her report of the enemy's force along the coast, as sent me by Captain *Prowse*, and as the *Naiad* is so low in provisions I have taken twenty tons of water from her for the *Mars*, and sent her with this dispatch, which contains also the report of the enemy's force as seen yesterday, with the state and condition of the squadron. I expect every moment the return of *Sir Robert Calder*, who will be master of your wishes with respect to the ships here. As I do not find any directions contained in your orders to him respecting them, I shall keep them all as long as their water and provisions will last, or until I receive your directions thereon. The *Spartiate* lost her mainyard yesterday, which is now splicing agreeably to the report inclosed, and it is hoped it may be serviceable; should it prove otherwise, I shall give her the mainyard of the *Mars* whenever that ship's water is reduced to thirty tons, and dispatch her to join you on her way.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE

Reconnoitred :

23rd August, 1803.

Ferrol.

Four French two-deckers, one brig.	{	Sails all bent, apparently ready for sea, a Rear-Admiral's flag, and a broad pennant of a Chef d'Escadre. ¹
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¹ Admiral *Bedout's* squadron from *Cape Français*, which put into *Corunna* on eluding the vigilance of *Rear-Admiral Campbell*, had meanwhile run over to *Ferrol* to gain the advantage of the arsenal there.

One Dutch two-decker.	{	In the arsenal, topmasts close down and unrigged, topsail yards in the tops.
Three Spanish two-deckers.	{	In ditto, with yards and topmasts struck, sails unbent, and lately re- turned from South America.

Corunna.

One French frigate ready for sea, mounting twenty-four 24-pounders on her main deck.

24th.—Went into Corunna this day, one Spanish frigate.

N.B.—There are no row boats in Ferrol or Corunna that we learn.

24th August, 1803.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 106

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 27th August, 1803.

On Thursday another ship of the line was added to the number in Brest Road, so that there are now six ships, independent of the great frigate, which has sometimes been counted as one.

The Aigle and the Pickle keep a highly commendable look out ; but it would be desirable to have a cutter here to be some relief to the Pickle, whose commander can never be in bed during the night.

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 107

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 27th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that his Majesty's sloop Seagull made her appearance

at noon this day, steering for Corunna in company with the Lord Nelson, East India ship, which had been captured by the Bellone, French privateer, thirteen days since, and engaged during the whole of the night before last by Captain Burke in a most gallant manner. He was, however, obliged by such long continuance of fire from a ship mounting near fifty guns to haul off, and refit his brig in her rigging, bend a new suit of sails, and fish her lower yards, and was on the point of renewing his attack upon her when he discovered this squadron, to the advanced ship of which she struck her colours.

The effects of Captain Burke's vigorous assaults are so evident on the Lord Nelson, and the comparative size and force of the ship he engaged are so manifest, as to strike the beholder with the highest admiration. I have directed him to accompany the prize to England, happy in having an opportunity of bearing testimony to his merit.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
ED. PELLEW.

P.S.—I have inclosed Captain Burke's letter to me, which will explain more fully his merits.

INCLOSURE

CAPT. BURKE TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Seagull, at Sea, 27th August, 1803.

Sir,—Having in pursuance of orders from Sir John Colpoys seen a convoy safe into Cork; on my return spoke a Portuguese schooner, who gave me information of his being spoken by a French privateer off Cape Clear. In consequence of which information I made sail in search of her, for the

preservation of the homeward-bound trade, and, while cruising for that purpose, I saw, at 1 P.M. on the 26th instant, in lat. 46° N., long. 12° , a large sail, which after a chase of five hours [was] brought to action, which lasted until daylight; when I found the masts and rigging so much cut up, having the larboard fore and main shrouds torn, and sprung stays, all the running rigging and sails, the fore yards shot away in the slings, with two shot between wind and water, that I was obliged to haul off to secure the masts and replace the rigging, still keeping sight of the enemy, determined when a little secured to engage him again, when I had the good fortune to fall in with you this morning. It is with sincere regret I have to add that I have on the occasion lost two valuable seamen killed, seven seamen and a marine wounded; among the latter I am sorry to say is Lieutenant Wm. Davies (slightly), to whose cool and steady conduct I am much indebted, as well as that of Lieutenant Weatherston, and Mr. Ellis the master. Indeed, I cannot do sufficient justice to the merits of the whole of the officers and ship's company for their cool and determined courage.

And have the honour to be, &c.,
HEN. BURKE.

No. 108

CORNWALLIS TO COLLINGWOOD

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 30th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have received your letter of the 27th containing the report of the enemy's force in Brest Road.

The great want of small vessels I have several times pointed out to the Admiralty. I particularly

stated to their Lordships in my letter of the 18th how very useful a large cutter would be to the inshore squadron.

I cannot send the boatswain of the *Doris* to his ship. It is probable he would have been just as much in the way to join her had he continued at Plymouth, and if he wishes it I have no objection to his returning there for that purpose.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 109

CAPTAIN FLEEMING TO CORNWALLIS

Egyptienne, 30th August, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that his Majesty's ship under my command last night captured the French privateer *la Chiffonette*, of fourteen guns and eighty men. She had been twenty-six days from Bordeaux, and had captured a brig belonging to Jersey, from Santa Cruz, bound to Hamburg, which has been since recaptured by his Majesty's ship *Endymion*. She sails remarkably fast, has been chased by several frigates, and once by this ship. When the *Chiffonette* was first discovered she was in the act of boarding an English brig, but quitted her on our approach.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

C. E. FLEEMING.

No. 110

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Ferrol, 3rd September, 1803.

Sir,—Yesterday morning, at 4 A.M., when running in for Cape Ortegal, I discovered a French line-of-battle ship and a frigate, to which I gave

chase. They instantly bore up for Corunna, and I am concerned to say they obtained that port before we could bring them to action. When running in for the port we discovered Sir Edward Pellew with his squadron under full sail, standing in to endeavour to cut them off, but the wind was so strong in favour of the enemy as to enable them to get into Corunna in spite of all our exertions. The Culloden exchanged several broadsides with the French ships. She had four men wounded, but the ship received no injury. At twelve o'clock, perceiving the Spanish battery to fire to claim the neutrality of their port, I immediately made the general signal of recall for all cruisers, which was instantly obeyed by the ships under the command of Sir Edward Pellew. Those French ships are very newly out of port, and are full of men. I am led to think they have brought round (from some port to the northward) men to complete the French ships at Ferrol, as I understand from our Consul at that place men were expected to be sent for the French ships there.

The enemy's force now at Ferrol is five sail of the line French, with two frigates, and one sail of the line Dutch.

I have judged it right to order Sir Edward Pellew to join you on his way into port to give you this information.¹

I have sent you the letters which have passed between Captain Prowse, his Excellency the Governor, and our Consul at Ferrol.

I have received all your orders sent at different times, and I shall do my utmost to fulfil them to your wishes.

The French line-of-battle ship mounted eighty

¹ On August 22, orders were issued for the *Tonnant*, with the *Spartiate* and *Mars*, to return to Cawsand Bay to replenish and refresh.

guns, and the frigate was one of their largest class ; they both appeared to be new ships.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

[The French ships chased into Corunna were the Duguay-Trouin, 74 (but with only 58 guns on board according to Troude, '*Batailles Navales*'), Captain Lhermite ; and the Guerrière, 40, Captain Beaudoin. After leaving Cape Français, the Duguay-Trouin was chased by the Elephant, 74. In company with the Guerrière, on August 30, 140 leagues W.N.W. of Cape Ortegal, she encountered the Boadicea (see No. 126). The action of September 2 is thus described in the log of the Culloden :—'A.M. $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9, made the signal for two strange ships ; at $\frac{1}{4}$ past 10 answered the signal "Examine strange ships ;" wore, and set the courses, let out 3 reefs, set top-gallant sails, jib, and spanker. At 11 commenced a running action with a French frigate, which lasted till 10 minutes past 12, when we answered the signal "Discontinue the action." Found the ring of the small bower anchor shot away' (other damage to fore topsail yard and running rigging). The following occurs in the journal of the Tonnant :—'A.M. 10, saw two ships to windward ; $\frac{1}{4}$ past, wore ship ; made all possible sail ; split the jib. 20 past 11, discovered the ship to be of the line and a frigate under French colours. 40 minutes past 11, Culloden being ahead, fired at the line-of-battle ship, and soon after at the frigate. Carried away our main top-gallant tie ; rove another. At noon the Culloden engaging the frigate. The line-of-battle ship got into and anchored in Corunna roads. P.M. 10 minutes past 12, Culloden ceased firing ; $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12, wore ship. In wearing, several shot were fired from the fort at

Corunna, which fell considerably short. Hauled to the wind to the northward. Prince of Wales came down and joined us with Rear-Admiral Sir R. Calder's flag.']

No. 111

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 4th September, 1803.

Sir,—As we had been long without information of what was doing in Brest, I was desirous of getting a fishing-boat of that port in order to obtain such intelligence as could be drawn from her crew, and directed Captain Wolfe to endeavour to take one. Last night l'Aigle and Pickle sent their boats towards where they usually lie. L'Aigle's boat returned in the night, but the Pickle's has not yet appeared, so that I am apprehensive they have fallen in with some armed vessel, which has captured her. In her were six men, and the Diamond's midshipman.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 112

*SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO LORD KEITH, IN THE
DOWNS*

6th September, 1803.

My Lord,—I have received and communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Lordship's letter of yesterday's date, inclosing, for their Lordships' information, a letter Rear-Admiral Montagu had received from Captain Strachey, of his Majesty's sloop *Jalouse*, respecting the importation into the enemy's harbours of articles necessary to construct flat boats, which are pre-

paring for the threatened invasion of this country, and I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you that they have sent copies of your Lordship's said letter and of its inclosures to Lord Hawkesbury for his Majesty's information.

I am, &c.,
EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 113

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Ferrol, 6th of September, 1803.

Sir,—Lieutenant Watt, commanding the lugger belonging to his Majesty's ship *Ville de Paris*, having joined me from Corunna, at which place he was lying when I drove the two French ships in, reports to me those ships came from San Domingo, and their names are le *Duguay-Trouin* and la *Glorieuse*; ¹ also that our squadron handled the frigate very roughly, having crippled her masts and yards, killed five or six, and wounded about seventeen men.

Lieutenant Watt was informed that another ship of the line was to sail from San Domingo in a few days after these left it.

I shall keep a sharp look out, and if she comes this way I hope to give you a good account of her.

I beg leave to refer you to Lieutenant Watt for all further information of things going on at Corunna.

I have directed him to deliver you this my dispatch as soon as he can, that you may be informed of all that is going on here.

Last night his Majesty's ship *Boadicea* joined me to say he had four days ago fallen in with a

¹ An error. The frigate in question was the *Guerrière*.

French ship of the line, and a frigate, ninety leagues to the N.W. of this place, with whom she had exchanged a broadside.¹ From comparing all circumstances, there is no doubt but it was those we chased into Corunna.

I have, in order to ascertain the certainty, directed Captain Maitland to stand in to Corunna to reconnoitre the two French ships, under the pretence of procuring some water and refreshments after his cruise

When he has so done, I shall send him to you with any further information he may be able to obtain, and of any occurrences that may pass whilst he is with me.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 114

An account of ships and vessels detained, &c., by his Majesty's squadron under my command, and reported to me since my last account, dated the 1st August, 1803. (A précis of the table.)

[The Hazard detained a Danish brig and an English brig, and the Diamond an Embden galliot, and an American brig and ship, which were sent into Plymouth.

The Conqueror captured a French ship, sent into Gibraltar; the Malta, another French ship; the Naiad, a French brig, which was sent to Plymouth.

The Endymion took a French schooner, and the boat of the Ville de Paris, under command of Lieutenant Watt, a French lugger, the Messenger.]

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 6th September, 1803.

W. CORNWALLIS.

¹ Captain Maitland's report to Cornwallis was dated September 18th. See No. 126, p. 158.

No. 115

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO SIR JOHN COLPOYS[*Most secret.*]

Admiralty Office, 7th September, 1803.

Sir,—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to signify their direction to you to order one of the largest and fastest sailing of the hired cutters under your orders, which may be immediately within your reach, to receive on board the two French gentlemen named in the margin,¹ with their servants (if they have any), and proceed with them as expeditiously as possible to the coast of Spain, and endeavour to land them at San Sebastian, not allowing his attention to be diverted from this service by any other object, and, having landed them there, to return to Plymouth for further orders, victualling them as her company during their continuance on board.

As it is of great importance that any information of their proceeding should not transpire, you will see the necessity of fixing on a discreet lieutenant to intrust with the execution of this service, and you will direct him to communicate with and be guided by the opinion and advice of the two gentlemen above mentioned in respect to the time and mode of putting them on shore, and strictly to enjoin him, neither before his sailing nor after his return, to let

¹ MM. Rousillon and Cocambeaux, otherwise described by the names of Rossollon or Rosselin, and Cocampot or Coquampot. They seem to have been French Royalists engaged in a secret mission, apparently of espionage, which failed in its purpose. One of them was imprisoned for a time. Cornwallis was instructed to take them off the French coast, but, meanwhile, Sir Edward Pellew sent them to him, and towards the end of October they were landed at Penzance by the *Indefatigable*. See No. 145, p. 187.

the nature of the service on which he shall have been employed be known further than can be possibly avoided.

I am, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 116

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 8th September, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I have received their Lordships' orders dated the 24th of last month (in pursuance of his Majesty's pleasure) to use my best endeavours to seize or destroy all ships and vessels belonging to the countries calling themselves the Italian and Ligurian Republics, or to any persons being subjects of the said countries, or inhabiting within any of their respective territories, which I may be able to fall in with, accordingly to which I shall attend, and distribute the said orders to the respective admirals, captains, commander, and commanding officers of his Majesty's squadron under my command.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 117

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 8th September, 1803.

[*Extract.*]

The Dragon joined me yesterday morning, and the Impérieuse in the afternoon. The former ship I have sent inshore off of Brest, to Rear-Admiral Collingwood, and the latter off Bordeaux

and that part of the coast, to prevent and intercept any of the enemy's frigates or privateers from getting out of, or any English vessels captured by their cruisers from being carried into, any of the ports thereabouts.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 118

LIEUT. HENRY ROWED TO COLLINGWOOD

Sheerness Cutter, off Brest, 9th September.¹

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you that at six o'clock this morning I observed two *chasse-marées* turning to windward on the southern side of Douarnenez Bay. I immediately gave chase with the cutter under my command; at half-past four the leewardmost ran ashore about four miles to the eastward of Pointe du Raz. I directly ordered the mate, with seven hands, in the largest boat, to bring her off, in which he succeeded, the crew deserting her on his approach, and retiring to the rocks, from which they kept up a weak fire of musketry, and threw down on the vessel large stones. As I saw this boat was successful by the *chasse-marée's* being got under sail and standing out, I did not lose a moment in making sail after the other. But by ten o'clock it fell calm, and as she was then nearly four miles to the eastward of us, and close inshore—to which she was, by the assistance of her sweeps, approaching fast—I had no other mode left of pursuing her with any probability of success (as my large boat was still on board the *chasse-marée* she had captured) but by manning the skiff. I had no sooner declared that this was

¹ The Sheerness was with the inshore squadron.

my intention, than John Marks, the boatswain, with three of the crew, volunteered their services to go with me—that being as many as the boat could contain. After a hard pull of nearly two hours, I saw the *chasse-marée* run on shore, or rather alongside of the rocks, under the battery, about eight or nine miles to the eastward of Pointe du Raz ; at the same time I observed a number of soldiers repairing to her with muskets. On our giving way alongside, the crew hurried on shore, though supported by a heavy fire of musketry from near thirty soldiers, which was kept up the whole time (within pistol shot) that we were employed in getting her off, fortunately without our sustaining the least hurt. In this we were successful, though all her halliards had been cut away previous to her crew's deserting her.

We had not towed her more than two cables' lengths from the shore when we perceived a boat, with a French officer and nine men armed with muskets, which had pulled after us in the wake of the *chasse-marée*, close alongside of her. We immediately gave up towing, and got on board the *chasse-marée*, at the very time the Frenchman was laying in his oars to lay her alongside. No sooner did he observe it was our determination to defend our prize than he retreated, though his number doubled ours, and the Sheerness was then three miles from us. After dropping gradually further and further astern, and keeping up an ineffectual fire of musketry till we were out of his reach, he gave up the pursuit. The battery fired two shot over us as we made off with our prize, but without effect. I should not presume, Sir, to trouble you with so circumstantial an account of this affair did I not consider it as an act of justice to Marks, my boatswain, to whose presence of mind and gallantry on the French boat's appearing alongside of us I feel myself indebted

for my success, as he absolutely exposed himself unarmed on the side the Frenchman was going to board the *chasse-marée* for at least half a minute before the rest could get out of the boat with their muskets.

I therefore trust I am not presuming too much when I recommend this gallant man to your notice. At the same time, I must add that the other three supported me like brave fellows.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

HENRY ROWED.

No. 119

CORNWALLIS TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th September, 1803.

Sir,—I send the *Dragon* to follow your orders and directions, and I inclose an order for the *Culloden* to join me off Ushant.

You will be pleased to issue the general memorandum sent herewith to the ships under my command with you. And I inclose an extract of a letter from New York, giving an account of Jerome Bonaparte having, with his companions, left Baltimore on July 28 last in the ship therein described,¹

¹ It was at first believed that Jerome Bonaparte was on board the *Epervier*, captured by the *Egyptienne* on July 27. Later information was to the effect that he and his companions had sailed as described in the *President*, an American vessel. Cornwallis accordingly sent the *Acasta* to the ships cruising to the westward, instructing them to detain the *President*, if she should have on board the persons named, and send her into port. The cruising stations of these vessels were as follows. *Phoenix*, on the edge of soundings, lat. 49° to 50° N.; *Hussar*, 3 or 4 degrees to the westward of soundings, lat. 47° to 50° N.; *Egyptienne*, long. 20° to 24° W., lat. 48° to 50° N.; *Endymion*, long. 20° to 25° W., lat. 48° to 50° N. The *Jamaica* and *Leeward Islands* convoys were to approach the Channel in the latitude of $49^{\circ} 20' N.$

and it is the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in the event of the said ship being met with, having the persons so described on board, that she should be detained and sent into port.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 120

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Corunna, 12th September, 1803.

Sir,—On the 6th inst. I wrote you, by Lieutenant Watt, commanding the *Ville de Paris's* lugger, since which I have twice had communication with Ferrol and Corunna. I find all the English prisoners were liberated, and leave given to them to go where they pleased; and, as I expected, the French only gave us the hope of having them delivered up to us, with the view of their getting the French prisoners sent on shore from our squadron off here, as you will see by the inclosed letter.

Captain Moring, who commanded the *Comet*, extra Indiaman, taken by the French squadron, is liberated. He informed the officer of the *Sirius* (who saw him at Ferrol) that the French were in daily expectation of receiving 1,500 men—800 were then at Bayonne, on their way to Ferrol—and they also expected stores to arrive for their squadron. Captain Moring further states, from some conversation which he overheard by accident, that this squadron, it is supposed, will endeavour to go to Ireland on some expedition. The line-of-battle ship lying at Corunna is full-manned, as well as the two frigates, and the Dutch line-of-battle ship at Ferrol is ready for sea.

The enemy's force at Ferrol and Corunna is five sail French and one Dutch of the line and two French frigates.

We have seen or heard nothing as yet of the other French ship of the line expected from San Domingo. The *Boadicea* is returned from examining the line-of-battle ship and frigate at Corunna, and Captain Maitland reports they are the same two ships he exchanged a broadside with at sea. She has not been able to obtain a supply of water, only a few refreshments.

For this last week it has blown very hard at east, with a thick fog, during which the *Colossus* sprung her main topmast. If any ship is coming to join me, you will, I hope, be able to forward one to her.

Captain Prowse reports the Spaniards have received orders to fit out here four sail of the line; and they further say that France has demanded their assistance, and that they fear they shall be compelled to join them in the war against England. If I may judge from their conduct towards this squadron, I should suppose there can be little doubt but there is something of this kind in agitation between France and Spain at this time. I have therefore constantly given orders to the frigates not to anchor at Corunna, when they have sent their boats in to gain intelligence, &c., &c.

The other day I directed Captain Prowse to send his boat into a bay to get us some sand. When she landed on the beach an officer's party came down to order them off, but, on a little expostulation, the officer (who was an Irishman) said 'he might take the sand, but that his orders were to order them off directly.' As a corroborating circumstance of my opinion respecting the hostile appearances of the Spaniards, I find they are very busy here in re-

mounting their cannon upon their batteries, and they say the French threaten to march 40,000 men into their country directly if they do not join them.

I have directed Captain Maitland to make the best of his way to deliver to you this dispatch, which I hope will meet with your approval.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

INCLOSURE

VICE-CONSUL MORROGH TO CAPTAIN PROWSE

Corunna, 7th September, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to receive your letter of this day's date. Had Mr. Fernandez given me in time the information I had a right to expect from him, I should certainly have done everything in my power to have detained here sixty-five British seamen that have been delivered to him from the French commissary at Ferrol; but I received no account from Mr. Fernandez till yesterday evening, near forty-eight hours after they left this place.¹ It seems he had sent them on Sunday last in a Spanish boat to sea, in hope some of the fleet would have been near Ferrol, which not being the case, the sailors took the boat from the Spaniards, as they say, and brought her in here. The report flying about, I could not get a boat to take them to sea for any money I offered, and the General, fearing there would be many difficulties, said it was better to have them land and sent off the following morning to Oporto, which was done, with an escort of twelve soldiers and officer. The English lugger sailed

¹ Cf. Sir Edward Pellew's commendation of the 'eager conduct' of Don Fernandez, Vice-Consul at Ferrol, and his remarks upon 'the languid and feeble efforts of Mr. Morrogh at Corunna,' Nos. 168 and 189, pp. 216, 247.

from hence last Friday; it was very unfortunate she was not here on Sunday last.¹

I have mentioned to the General your request, and he says you may send your boat in for refreshments when you please, but with her colours flying and during the day time, as has been this day practised.

I have the honour to be, &c.

PATK. MORROGH.

No. 121

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 13th September, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I have received their Lordships' orders of the 6th instant relative to the blockade of Havre de Grace and the other ports of the River Seine, and that, agreeably to their directions signified to me by your letter which accompanied them, I shall, on distributing the same to the officers under my command, give the necessary orders to be particularly careful to insert on the papers of any neutral vessels bound to the said ports, which they may examine, the circumstance of their having been so examined and apprised of the blockade.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

¹ Some correspondence had taken place concerning the exchange of prisoners, through the mediation of the Governor of Ferrol. The French admiral had over eighty of them in his hands, brought from the West Indies, and Captain Prowse was to see to securing them. They might not all be willing to enter his Majesty's service. They were to be delivered as soon as the French prisoners were in the governor's charge. It appears from Consul Morrogh's letter that they were liberated without conditions, and not secured for the fleet.

No. 122

CAPTAIN ELPHINSTONE TO CORNWALLIS

Diamond, at Sea, 13th September, 1803.

Sir,—In pursuance of your orders of the 4th inst., I proceeded with his Majesty's ship under my command off Rochefort.

On the 7th inst. I spoke a galliot from Brouage bound to Embden, the master of which informed me that, in coming down from Brouage, he saw a three-deck ship and frigate lying within Isle d'Aix.

On the 8th inst. I spoke a Prussian from Brouage, who gave me the same information, adding their sails were bent.

On the 9th inst. I entered the Pertuis d'Antioche. A corvette at an anchor off Rochelle got under way and ran up to Isle d'Aix, where a three-deck ship and large frigate were at anchor, both apparently ready for sea, their jibs and stay-sails bent, and, I think, their courses and topsails; it becoming exceedingly hazy, and their yards end on, could not be positive. We were then within four miles of them.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOS. ELPHINSTONE.

No. 123

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 16th September, 1803.

Sir,—Since the last communication I had the honour to address to you on the 10th instant there has been no apparent change in the state of the enemy in Brest. The ships in the Road exercise

less, their gun-vessels do not come out as they were used to do, and they appear less active in forming their men to naval exercises than they were two months since.

When the wind came westerly yesterday, and was unsettled, I thought it proper to weigh from the anchorage, and the squadron is now under sail between Ushant and the Saints.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 124

COLLINGWOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, off Brest, 17th September, 1803.

Sir,—This morning, as soon as the wind came to the north-eastward, I pushed in for the station off St. Matthew's Point, and, on approaching it, found the gun-vessels had quitted the harbour of Brest, and got into the Passage du Four—two brigs and five large luggers. They have anchored under the fort at Conquet, where two brigs and four luggers were arrived before them.

Those I have no doubt are intended to proceed to the eastward whenever the wind is favourable. To block them up in this port effectually I do not think is practicable. In the varieties of weather which at this season are becoming more common, opportunities will occur in which no vigilance can prevent their escape.¹

They cannot move from their present station until they have a wind to go up the Channel. The

¹ At this time several boats escaped from Brest unimpeded, and were to join merchant vessels at Roscoff, Morlaix, Lannion, Paimpol, Bréhat, and St. Brieuc, on their way to Granville.

ships in the port of Brest remain in exactly the same state they have been for some time past.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 125

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO LORD KEITH

17th September, 1803.

My Lord,—I have received and communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of yesterday's date upon the subject of the blockade of Havre de Grace, and in return I have it in command from their Lordships to acquaint you that, being fully apprised of the importance of that station, they have taken care to place a force competent (as they conceive) to that service, under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir James Saumarez.

Although their Lordships consider your station to extend no further to the southward than Beachy Head, on the coast of England, and Cape de Caux, on the coast of France, yet they have commanded me to signify their direction to your Lordship to order your cruisers to render such assistance to those under the command of Sir James Saumarez as the movements of the enemy may at any time render necessary.

I am, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

[September 17, 1803 (30th Fructidor, year XI). Vice-Admiral Truguet¹ was appointed on this day

¹ Vice-Admiral Count Laurent Jean François Truguet was born at Toulon in 1752. He entered the navy in 1766, and, in 1779, saved the life of D'Estaing, wounded at the siege of Savannah. He was for some time in Constantinople, and visited England in

to the command of the French forces at Brest, and Rear-Admiral Missiessy to that of a division, Rear-Admiral Dordelin retaining command of the other division. (*Archives Nationales*, A.F. iv. 588.) Truguet's appointment had been decided upon some time before, for an intimation of it had been sent by Decrès to Caffarelli on July 27. The Prefect, at the period we have reached, was agitated by fear of internal troubles in Brittany. He wrote to Decrès on September 28 that a chief of Chouans had enrolled 52 persons at an inn on the borders of Morbihan, and that an insurrection, provoked and supported by the English, was imminent. That disaffection existed was shown by the fact that the Patriote was fired in Brest harbour in January 1804—a circumstance that will be referred to later.^{1]}

1791 to investigate our naval institutions and resources. In 1792 he became rear-admiral, and co-operated at the taking of Nice and Villefranche. Given a new command, he was removed and incarcerated during the Terror, but was liberated on the 9th Thermidor. He was Minister of Marine at the time of the expedition of Morard de Galles and Hoche to Bantry Bay. In 1798, refusing to return from Spain, whither he had been sent as ambassador, he was placed on the list of *émigrés*, but was restored at the instance of Talleyrand and Gohier after the 18th Brumaire. When the First Consul was proclaimed Emperor, Truguet was so bold as to express his personal opinion—when transmitting the felicitations of the officers and men under his command from on board the *Vengeur* at Brest—that the abandoned title was the more honourable. His letter remained unanswered, but on May 1, 1804, Napoleon, writing to Decrès, in a letter given later under that date, expressed his dissatisfaction at the inactivity of the Brest fleet, which he construed as disobedience of his orders, and Truguet was relieved of his command in favour of Ganteaume, who proceeded from Toulon to assume the command at Brest. Truguet remained in disgrace until 1808, but assumed command of the Rochefort squadron after that attack upon it by Lord Cochrane in the Basque Roads, which was so sadly marred by the feeble conduct of Gambier.

¹ Levot, *Hist. de la Ville et du Port de Brest sous le Consulat et l'Empire*, p. 257.

No. 126

CAPTAIN MAITLAND TO CORNWALLIS

Boadicea, off Ushant, 18th September, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that on the 29th of last month, Cape Ortegal bearing E.S.E., distance 140 leagues, I discovered two sail, which I immediately gave chase to ; but, night and thick weather coming on, I was not able clearly to ascertain what they were until 3 P.M. on the following day, when I made the one a French line-of-battle ship, with a broad pennant, and the other a large French frigate, both steering direct for Rochefort. At this time they wore, and stood towards me. I passed about half a mile to windward of the line-of-battle ship, and fired two well-directed broadsides into her, which she returned with her whole broadside, when they both wore and chased me for two hours. Although a number of their shot took effect on our sails and rigging, we received no damage of any consequence.

The enemy's line-of-battle ship must have received some damage, as I saw several shot strike her hull, and after giving over the chase they unbent their fore-topsail. I left them 150 leagues east from Rochefort, and, as the wind was strong from the northward, I judged it my duty to run for Sir Robert Calder with the information.

The conduct of the officers and ship's company on receiving the cool broadside of a ship of the line was most exemplary, and gave me the greatest satisfaction.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JNO. MAITLAND.

¹ For the circumstances relating to this action with the Duguay-Trouin and the Guerrière, see No. 110, p. 139, with the note following it, and No. 113, p. 143.

No. 127

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

19th September, 1803.

Sir,—An application having been made by Lieutenant Lapenotiere, commanding the Pickle schooner, for a court martial on John Sneedon, boatswain's mate of that vessel, on various charges, and particularly for having offered a French prisoner, named Jean François Caraces, who is now a pilot on board the Sheerness cutter, a reward to pilot the schooner into a French port, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to signify their direction to you to make an arrangement for sending the Pickle to Plymouth, that the prisoner may be brought to trial.

I am, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

[Sneedon, boatswain's mate of the Pickle, was tried, October 3, for insolence, desertion, mutinous conduct, and disobedience, and for having offered a bribe to a French pilot in his Majesty's service if he would pilot the schooner into a French port, saying he (Sneedon) 'would rise and take her from the officers.' The pilot in question was Caraces, who appears to have been taken from a French fishing boat a few days before, and pressed into the service—not an isolated case. He deposed that Sneedon did not propose to seize the Pickle, but asked to be set ashore in France, where he would pass as an American. Sneedon was acquitted on the main charge, but received 100 lashes for desertion, &c. He had surrendered on board the Foudroyant with two other seamen of the schooner, saying they 'were discontented and very wet in the Pickle.'

(‘Courts Martial,’ October, 1803.) A mutinous spirit was betrayed in the schooner later on, when she was off Ferrol. Lapenotiere was in command of the Pickle at Trafalgar, and brought home the dispatches. It was unusual, if not unprecedented, to send such dispatches home by an officer of his rank, and Lapenotiere received no mark of royal favour, as was customary.]

No. 128

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN SUTTON (MARS).

*By the Honourable William Cornwallis,
Admiral of the Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed immediately to proceed in the ship you command inshore off of Brest for the purpose of watching that port, with the ships and vessels named in the margin,¹ whose commanders are ordered to follow your directions.

Rear-Admiral Collingwood, who is at present there, will furnish you with attested copies of all orders and directions which he has received, relative to the same, for your guidance.

Given, &c., off Ushant,

22nd September, 1803,

W. CORNWALLIS.

[On the same day Cornwallis wrote to Collingwood instructing him that he was to be relieved by Captain Sutton, and directing him to join the flag off

¹ Plantagenet, Conqueror, Defiance, Ardent, and Sheerness cutter. The Hussar and Sea Flower brig were ordered to join the inshore squadron on Sept. 24th, the Boadicea on Sept. 30th, and the Doris and Joseph, hired cutter, on Oct 2nd. The Sheerness was sent to Plymouth, Oct. 4th.

Ushant with the Venerable and Royal Sovereign. Cornwallis informed Sir Evan Nepean at the same time of the change, and said, from want of frigates, he had had to withdraw the Aigle from the inshore squadron, and send her off the bar of Oporto to bring home the convoy.]

No. 129

CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Intelligence received September 22, 1803, by his Majesty's ship Sirius, Captain Prowse, whose officer was up at Ferrol yesterday.

One thousand five hundred seamen are expected at Ferrol this evening, 22nd.

Four regiments of Spanish troops are ordered immediately to Ferrol.

A French general is arrived at Corunna to take the command of the Spanish troops intended for their frontiers.

All Spanish packets are ordered to be armed, &c., &c., on the war establishment.

As soon as the French get their reinforcement they are expected to sail.

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 130

VICE-CONSUL FERNANDEZ TO CAPT. PROWSE

Ferrol, 23rd September, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you that the Governor of Ferrol has expressed his disapprobation at any English officers coming on shore until pratique is obtained, and that if they want any necessities they must wait in the boat until they

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shall obtain regular leave ; and expressly said if any officer arrived without such leave he should make me responsible and make me perform quarantine. I mentioned to the Governor the French having insulted your boat's crew, but he gave me no satisfactory reply.

I am, Sir, &c.,
FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ.

No. 131

CAPT. MASEFIELD TO CORNWALLIS

Atalante, at Sea, 25th September, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you that in compliance of your orders of the 20th inst., I arrived off Lorient the next day, and found cruising there his Majesty's ship *Minotaur*; and on the 22nd in the morning stood in with the *Minotaur* to reconnoitre the enemy's force, and discovered two ships' masts above the land with their top-gallant masts up and rigged. I believe them to be a line-of-battle ship and a frigate. I then proceeded to Quiberon Bay, and on the 23rd boarded a Swede coming out of Nantes, who informed me there were thirty gun-brigs building at that place, four of which were launched, and the others would be ready in about three months; he likewise said there was a new frigate launched called *la Gloire* that would mount fifty guns. On Saturday, the 24th, I stood in to Quiberon Bay, and discovered on the Islands of Hoedic and Houat small camps, about twenty tents, on each of the islands; and in the harbour of Vannes I saw a large lugger and an armed brig with French colours and pennant flying. In turning out of the Bay we were so fortunate as to cut off the land with our boats three

large vessels loaded with oak timber fit for building large ships, tin, iron, &c., coming from Nantes, bound to Lorient, on account of the French Government; four vessels of the same description passed by the night before. We likewise took a lugger in the Bay, from Bordeaux bound to Brest, laden with brandy, wine, and soap. As the timber vessels are very leaky and require a great deal of care, and as they have taken thirty-six men to man them, and as I have no navigators in the sloop I command but the two lieutenants and the master, I have thought it proper to accompany them myself for their security.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

J. O. MASEFIELD.

[Vice - Admiral Thévenard, naval prefect at Lorient, reported to Decrès the captures referred to in Captain Masefield's letter. A flotilla of fourteen transports which had left Lorient for Boulogne was unable to get beyond Bénédict owing to the pressure of the blockaders, who would now be able to check the coastwise trade. He had accordingly instructed the coasting vessels at Nantes not to leave the port until the wind should change and drive the English away.¹]

No. 132

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO LORD KEITH

29th September, 1803.

My Lord,—I have received and communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Lordship's letter of the 25th inst., acquainting me for

¹ *Arch. de la Marine*, BB³, 211, f. 64.

their Lordships' information that Captain Jackson, of the *Autumn*, had informed Rear-Admiral Montagu that, from the situation of the enemy's small craft at Calais, he was of opinion they could be bombarded with success, and that the Rear-Admiral had despatched the *Discovery* and *Conflict* to join Captain Jackson, and directed him to make the attack whenever an opportunity should present itself; and I am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint your Lordship, by letter which has been this day received from the Rear-Admiral, it appears that Captain Jackson made an attack on Calais on the 27th inst., the particulars of which have no doubt been communicated to your Lordship, and in which Captain Jackson appears to have been as successful as could under the circumstances have been expected.

I have their Lordships' further commands to signify their direction to your Lordship not to authorise any further bombardment without receiving further instructions upon the subject, their Lordships perceiving it advisable that no attack should again be made on any of the enemy's ports until a greater number of bomb vessels should be collected, and a strong squadron be at hand to support them.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

¹ Keith reported that Havre and the ports of the Seine were the places east of Cape Barfleur from which serious attempts might be expected. A little later he inquired what steps would be taken when the signal was made that the enemy's embarkation was preparing or had sailed. He was informed (Oct. 10) that the *Sea Fencibles* would be placed under his orders, and that the captains of flotillas would receive the same instructions. Sir James Saumarez, at Guernsey, was ordered (October 14) to send in particulars as to gunboats preparing at Havre and in the Seine. He reported three days later that the enemy's boats had left Granville, but was ordered to keep the bomb vessels with him until the boats had quitted that part of the coast.

[It seems desirable at this point to record certain facts. On September 26 Cornwallis reported that Nelson had sent Sir Richard Strachan in the *Donegal* to command off Cadiz, and that Captain Buller had accordingly returned, and was proceeding to Cawsand Bay.

On September 30 Captain Jervis was ordered to proceed in the *Magnificent* to Cork and place himself under the orders of Lord Gardner. A fresh disposition of the forces on the Irish coast was made a little later. (See No. 146, p. 188.)

Captain Sutton (*Mars*) was now inshore off Brest, having relieved *Collingwood*. The *Boadicea*, one of the ships with him, struck on a rock, and was convoyed by the *Egyptienne* to Portsmouth, where she was repaired, and returned to the inshore squadron on October 11. She was ordered two days later to cruise off Vigo to prevent the enemy from sending prizes into Spanish ports. The orders to individual ships at this period contain instructions, in case ships with transports and troops should be met with, to ascertain their destination and immediately report.

At the beginning of October the *Minotaur* was off Lorient, the *Dreadnought* off Rochefort, and the *Impérieuse* off Bordeaux. The *Minotaur* and *Conqueror* were afterwards off Rochefort.

On October 6 Sir Edward Pellew was ordered to return in the *Tonnant* off Ferrol, there to relieve Sir Robert Calder, taking under his orders the *Spartiate*, *Colossus*, *Impétueux*, *Dragon*, *Sirius*, and *Mary* cutter. Calder joined Cornwallis off Ushant in the *Prince of Wales*, and proceeded to Cawsand Bay.]

No. 133

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

*Observed in Brest Road from the Ville de Paris on
October 9, 1803 :*

Seven ships of the line.

One supposed two-decks ; yards and topmasts struck.

Four frigates.

One kind of store ship, with a tier of guns, as large as a frigate.

Two corvettes.

Two brigs.

No. 134

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

*Intelligence obtained from a Dane who came out of
Brest on October 10, 1803.*

In the outer road of Brest : Seven sail of the line, three of them eighty-gun ships, the others seventy-fours, apparently in all respects ready for sea ; but believed they had not above 400 men upon an average on board each ship.

There are eight frigates and corvettes, four of those large frigates, ready for sea. A Rear-Admiral has the command of the squadron, but knew of no expectation or report of their going to sea, but believed them to be in want of men.

In the inner harbour, and close to the northernmost point, the Jean Bart, a seventy-four, with sails bent and guns in, ready to come into the outer road, and three more seventy-four gun ships (within her) that were quite rigged and fitting out.

In the port are four three-decked ships getting forward for arming ; one of them, the Revenge

[i.e. *Vengeur*, 120], a first-rate, and the largest ship they have, was to be immediately fitted. There may be about ten or twelve line-of-battle ships, besides the three-decked ships now in the port, that are in a state to be fitted out; the rest, making upwards of twenty sail, are in a bad state.

In the dockyard they are employed getting forward the ships of the line. There are no frigates in a good state.

There are no more troops at Brest than those sufficient for the garrison.

No. 135

CAPTAIN MASEFIELD TO CAPTAIN ELPHINSTONE (DIAMOND)

Atalante, Quiberon Bay, 10th October, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you, in obedience to your signal to chase last evening that part of the convoy, consisting of two ketches and one brig, that were running under the Point of St. Gildas, I tacked and stood after them in the sloop I command, and obliged them to run on shore off the mouth of the River of Peneuf; and having considered it very possible to cut them out in the night, as the wind was directly off shore, I dispatched Lieutenant Hawkins in the six-oared cutter, and Mr. Richard Burstal, master, in the five-oared cutter, armed on that service, after it became dark, and stood in with the brig, as near as I could go for the shoal, to protect them. About half-past 9 P.M. the boats got up to the above vessels, when Lieutenant Hawkins boarded and took possession of the in-shore vessel, but found her aground; and, a number of troops along the beach keeping up a heavy fire

of musketry on his boat, assisted by two field-pieces and a party of troops on board the other two vessels (previously embarked from the shore), after cutting her cable, and firing a considerable time on the other vessel near him, he found it impossible to do anything with her, and very properly left her, to go to the assistance of the other boat, who had by this time boarded the brig, in defiance of a party of ten or twelve soldiers, with their muskets and sabres ; killed six of the troops, hove two overboard, and drove the rest with the crew below. After cutting her cable, finding she was aground, and a light vessel, they returned with both boats on board, not thinking proper, from motives of humanity, to set her on fire, as several people were heard below, supposed to be wounded. I am exceedingly sorry to inform you, on the first fire of the soldiers, one of our men, Henry Brennan, sailmaker, was killed, and, in boarding, two seamen wounded, but are in a fair way of recovering. When it is considered that Mr. Burstal, the master, the sergeant of marines, and five other men boarded this vessel (with ten soldiers on deck with charged bayonets), and performed what they did, I trust you will see and admire with me the very resolute and gallant conduct of Mr. Burstal and the six brave fellows with him. Indeed, the officers and crews in both boats deserve the highest praise, though unfortunately it was out of their power to bring the vessels off, all three being fast aground, within half a cable's length of the beach, and the shore covered with troops, keeping an incessant fire with their muskets and the two field-pieces on them. I had the pleasure to see the brig lying on a ridge of rocks this morning, apparently bilged.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JNO. MASEFIELD.

No. 136

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO LORD KEITH[*Secret.*]

Admiralty Office, 11th October, 1803.

My Lord,—As it appears essentially necessary that some plan should be adopted for defeating any projects the enemy may form of a descent on that part of the coast within the limits of your Lordship's command during the winter months, my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have deemed it advisable that I should transmit to your Lordship for your consideration a general outline of the plan which they conceive to be best adapted to that purpose, the leading points of which are : first, that of having an active force on the enemy's coast for the purpose of keeping a vigilant and constant look-out on their proceedings, and preventing, as far as may be practicable, any considerable number of boats or craft from leaving their ports unmolested ; and, secondly, to fix such stations on our coast as may be best calculated to operate against the enemy in case they should elude the vigilance of our cruisers on their coast, or put to sea in such force as to render the light cruisers incapable of making any effectual resistance against them.

On a consideration of this important subject their Lordships think it will be of advantage to the public service that the limits of your Lordship's command on the coast of France should be extended to Cape Barfleur, and on the English coast to Selsea Bill, so as to include the river Seine and the Owers.

With respect to the first mentioned coast they conceive that not less than four frigates and as many sloops should be appropriated expressly to

the purpose of blockading Havre and the ports within the Seine. This force appears to be absolutely necessary, as it will appear by the inclosed intelligence that the enemy are now preparing a class of vessels of a greater force and burden than any they have hitherto (as far as their Lordships are informed) constructed in any of the other ports between that place and Flushing.

In the event of the ships and vessels employed in the blockade of Havre being blown off their station by strong S.W. or westerly winds, they should be directed to rendezvous at Dungeness. With easterly winds it is to be hoped they may be able to keep their station; and, as the wind from which the greatest difficulty is to be apprehended is from the N.W. and N., they should in that case be directed to keep to the N.E. of Cape de la Hève, and never proceed to Portsmouth unless absolutely forced to do so.

It seems necessary that a small force¹ should rendezvous within the Owers, for which service the merchant ships lately purchased and placed on the establishment of sloops appear to be particularly applicable. When the wind is easterly they should get under way and proceed off Arundel (between the Owers and Beachy Head), and when the wind shifts they should anchor in the Park.

Your Lordship will understand that a ship of the line will constantly be stationed at St. Helens under Admiral Montagu, which will, in case of necessity, afford protection to the sloops on this extremity of your station.

The next station to be considered is Dungeness, to which a squadron of a ship of fifty guns, four frigates, four sloops, and as many gun brigs and cutters should be appropriated.

¹ Two sloops.

This squadron should be directed to rendezvous in the East Bay (of which, as well as the West Bay, your Lordship will perceive by a separate letter a survey has been made), with orders to the commanding officer to take care that a part of his squadron be always off Boulogne, Dieppe, and Fécamp, when the wind should be from N.E. to S., at which time the frigates should take a convenient anchorage, keeping the small craft always under way inside of them during the night; and, as fresh beef will be supplied to this squadron from Lydd, and the water be brought down to the beach, none of the ships of the squadron should ever go to the Downs unless from some unavoidable necessity.

The squadron in the Downs, where the Commander-in-Chief should be, should detach from thence a sufficient number of cruisers off Calais and Dunkirk, and, in order that he may be enabled so to do, a force of not less than three frigates, six sloops, and several¹ smaller vessels should rendezvous in the Downs, in addition to the two flagships which may be stationed there with the flag officers.

The station next to be attended to is that off Flushing, or rather at the entrance of the Scheldt, to which station a force should be appropriated of not less than a fifty-gun ship, three frigates, four of the merchant ship sloops, and six smaller vessels. This force, excepting the latter, should continually be at anchor within the banks, and the small vessels constantly be advanced, particularly in the night, when the wind is from S. to N.E.

In order that this important station should be properly attended to, both as to its effect and safety, their Lordships intend to dispatch Captain Bligh

¹ Ten.

with two of the best of the Flushing pilots for the purpose of making his observations, and to report his opinion of the situation best adapted for placing the squadron to be allotted to the service above mentioned ; and they wish to know your Lordship's opinion how far it may be advisable to place a light on the Galloper, in case it should be found impracticable to keep an anchorage off the Scheldt during the winter, in which case a light on the Galloper might be of service to a squadron cruising between the Thames mouth and Flushing.

Whenever any part of this squadron should stand in need of refreshments it should be directed to rendezvous in Yarmouth Roads, but only one or two of the ships or vessels should come over at a time. After having remained as long as may be necessary, they will be able to fetch back to their stations whenever the wind may be at the northward and eastward, and should therefore on no account proceed to the Nore or Downs, excepting that they should stand in need of any material assistance from the dockyard.

For the station off Helvoet, three frigates, as many good sailing sloops, and three cutters will be required ; these should also rendezvous at Yarmouth, and take care never to be caught there with the wind at east.

If any ship of the line should get out from the basin of Helvoet, the force off that port must be augmented accordingly. On this point it is hardly necessary to call to your Lordship's recollection that a ship of the line requires the springs to get out and the wind from N.N.E. to S.S.E.

For the station off the Texel, two ships of two decks, two frigates, two sloops, and three cutters at least should be appropriated ; they should be directed to rendezvous in Yarmouth Roads, and

never continue there after the wind should come to the north, since they cannot work out of Saint Nicholas's Gut when the wind is in the eastward.

In addition to the stations above mentioned, it is to be observed that a force must be appropriated to the station at the mouths of the Elbe and Weser ; for, though it will be impossible during the winter season to keep up a regular blockade, it will be necessary that three frigates and three sloops should be allotted to that service. This force should, whenever it may be necessary for it to return into port, endeavour to proceed to the Humber or Leith, preferring the former if possible, and resume the station as soon as possible after the crews shall have been sufficiently refreshed.

Having stated to your Lordship the general outline, it will appear that

Six ships of two decks,
Twenty-two frigates,
Twenty-eight sloops, and
Twenty-six smaller vessels

will be required, which, considering the extent of the force under your Lordship's orders, can without inconvenience be allotted to those particular services, leaving a sufficient force for the protection of the different parts of the northern coast, and allowing for ships and vessels which must be in the king's ports for the purpose of obtaining the necessary repairs.

When your Lordship shall have considered the plan which has been now suggested, their Lordships are desirous of receiving your opinion thereupon, and this opinion they wish to be furnished with as soon as possible.

Their Lordships have directed me to add that they think it advisable that the station of the Humber should be reinforced by one of the two-

decked ships, and propose that the *Gelykheid*¹ should be applied to that purpose, Rear-Admiral Thornbrough shifting his flag from her to the *Ruby*; that the station at Leith should also be reinforced by another two-decked ship, for which purpose they intend to allot the *Glatton*, now in the River Thames, as soon as she can be got ready, intending, as soon as it can be arranged, to employ another flag officer under your Lordship's orders on that particular station.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 137

*SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS*²

Admiralty Office, 13th October, 1803.

[*Secret.*]

Sir,—I have the commands of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you for your information an extract of intelligence, which has lately been received, of the preparations making by the enemy, in the ports of Brest and Lorient, with a view to a descent on Ireland.³ The source from which this intelligence has been obtained is of that description that no doubt ought to be entertained that the expedition will be attempted whenever a favourable opportunity presents itself to the enemy for so doing, either by the absence of the squadron under your command from its station, or of its being from any circumstances so reduced in point of numbers as may induce the enemy to risk an attack

¹ A Dutch sixty-four captured at Camperdown.

² From a rough draft among the Secret Letters. I have not found any reference to this letter in Cornwallis's papers, and it was possibly never issued in this form from the Admiralty.

³ See No. 146, p. 188, and the note following.

from it. Their Lordships have therefore deemed it of importance to the public service that I should call your immediate attention to the object of the enemy, as pointed out in the intelligence above mentioned, and that such a disposition for a part of your squadron, for the present to consist of five ships of the line,¹ should be made, as may under the different circumstances be best adapted for defeating the enemy's designs, whenever he may make an attempt to carry them into execution.

On a reference to the state of the force under your command, it appears that, exclusive of the squadron employed off Ferrol, you have now with you twelve ships of the line.² I include the Malta, as, by a letter which I have received from Sir John Colpoys, that ship has sailed from Plymouth seven days since, and their Lordships expect that you will also immediately be joined by the San Josef. So that, supposing the Tonnant to be detached off Ferrol to make up the five ships above mentioned, the ships composing the Brest squadron, including the Neptune, Ardent, Foudroyant, Northumberland, and Culloden, now at Plymouth, will amount to eighteen sail, to which two other ships will be added as soon as they can be got ready. Calculating, therefore, upon making up the squadron to twenty ships of the line, upon twelve ships of the line being constantly at sea, while the remainder may necessarily be in port for the purpose of repair and refreshing their crews, their Lordships think it will be advisable that at least six of them should be constantly with you, in such a position as to be able to attack the enemy very shortly after he may

¹ Prince of Wales, Colossus, Spencer, Dragon, Tonnant.

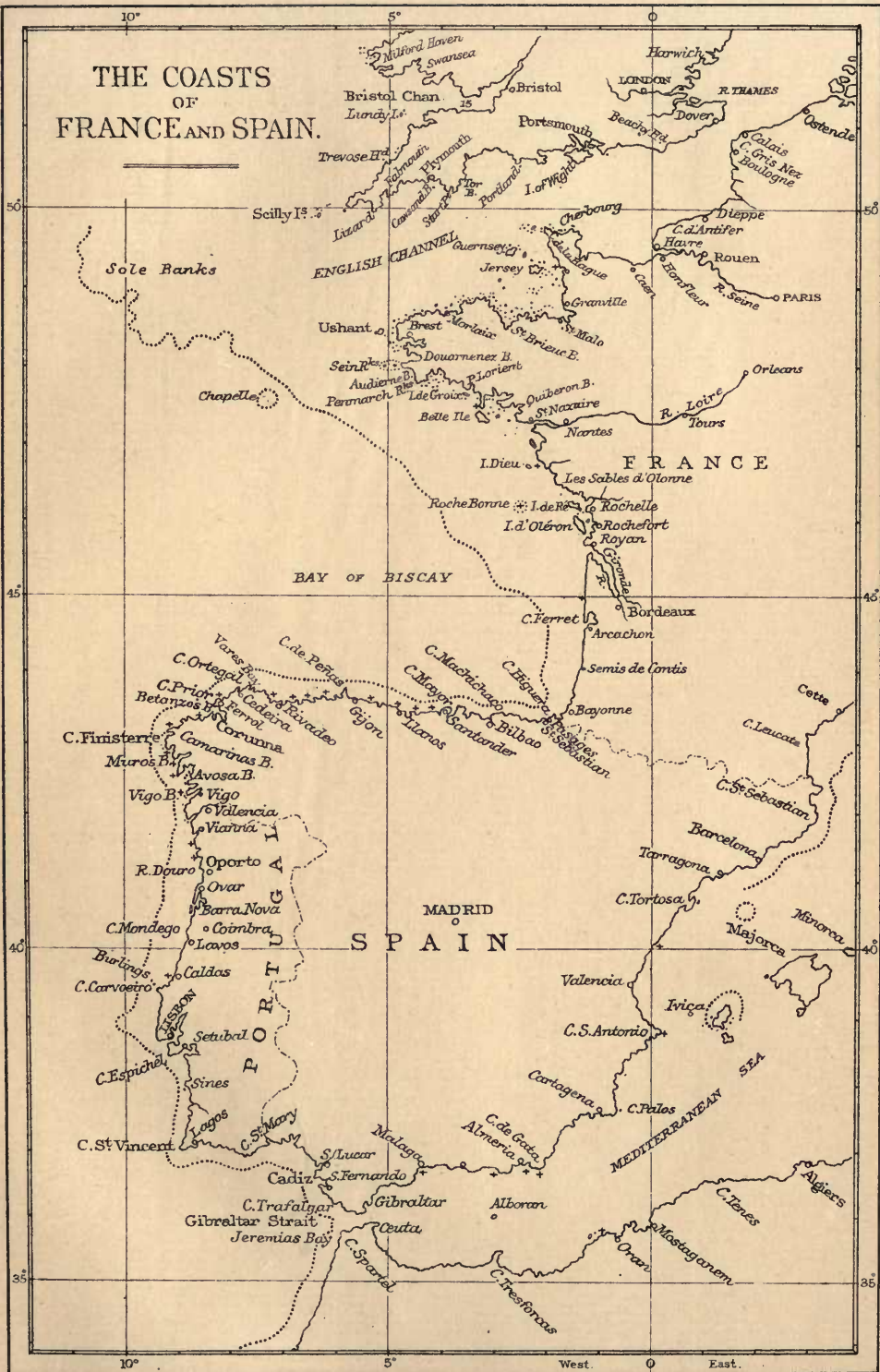
² Ville de Paris, Royal Sovereign, Dreadnought, Venerable, Plantagenet, Defiance, Impétueux, Conqueror, Minotaur, Spartiate, Mars, Malta.

be able to put to sea, and that the remainder of the force, excepting what may be proper for guarding the stations of Lorient and Rochefort, should form the inshore squadron, accompanied by such of the frigates as may be best adapted to that particular service, and whose commanders may be best acquainted with the local situation of that part of the coast of France.

On considering the various circumstances of wind and weather, their Lordships judge it advisable you should fix your rendezvous with the body of your squadron at the distance of leagues off Ushant, so as to be able to keep up a constant communication with the inshore squadron, and to keep the Channel open. If from the violence of the or winds you should not be able to continue on your station, or in the event of the winds blowing with equal violence from the opposite direction, you may be unable to take a position until the weather may be so moderate as to admit of your returning to your station, you are to endeavour to resume it the moment it may be possible to do so.

If, during your absence from your station, or if, unfortunately, the enemy should be enabled to leave the port of Brest without being brought to action, you are to follow with such part of the force as may be with you, according to the best intelligence you may receive; but not obtaining any information whereby your proceeding may be regulated, you are, in the first instance, to proceed off Cape Clear, and take such a position there as you may conceive to be best adapted for defeating any attempt which may be made upon Ireland, and remain there until you shall obtain some certain information of the enemy, or until you shall receive instructions from their Lordships to regulate your further proceedings; taking care, before you quit

THE COASTS
OF
FRANCE AND SPAIN.





your station off Brest, to leave such of your cruisers there as may be sufficient to bring you constant information of the enemy's proceedings there, and at the other ports in its vicinity, and to send notice to their Lordships, as well as to Lord Gardner at Cork, and to the commanding officer of the squadron off Ferrol, of your intentions.

As it appears to their Lordships to be more convenient to the service that the ships composing the squadron to be stationed off Ferrol should, whenever there may be occasion for them to recruit their provisions and stores, proceed to Bantry Bay rather than to Plymouth,¹ their Lordships have thought proper to place those ships under the orders of Lord Gardner, who will be instructed to send such directions to the officer commanding it [the squadron] as he may find necessary;² and, in order that his Lordship may be apprised of the instructions under which the officer at present commanding it is acting, their Lordships are desirous of being furnished, as soon as may be, with a copy of your orders to him; and this arrangement appears to their Lordships to be the more convenient as, from all the intelligences which have yet reached them, it appears that the enemy's squadron at Ferrol is under orders to be employed against Ireland rather than any other part of the United Kingdom.

That you may be fully informed of the disposition which has been made by their Lordships for repelling the assaults of the enemy from the ports of the Atlantic, their Lordships have judged it

¹ See the instructions to Lord Gardner on this matter, No. 146, p. 188.

² The intention of placing the ships off Ferrol directly under the orders of Lord Gardner was not carried into effect, and the dispositions alluded to in the text were otherwise changed. The arrangements are further explained in Nos. 146 and 161.

proper I should acquaint you that they mean to reinforce the squadron under Lord Gardner by as many ships as will enable him not only to relieve the Ferrol squadron from time to time, but enable him to keep a squadron of at least six ships of the line constantly between Mizen Head and the Durseys, independently of the service which I shall hereafter have occasion to mention; and that it will be distinctly important to the service that, after your receiving any information of the enemy's proceedings that may be proper to be known by his Lordship, or the officer commanding the abovesaid squadron, you should send the earliest intelligence of it, that he may take his measures accordingly, as the circumstances may appear to require.

Although it is hoped that the squadron under your command and that of Lord Gardner, from the positions which will be taken by them, will effectually prevent any attempt being made by the enemy from the western ports undiscovered, yet, as an additional precaution, and with a view to the protection of the trade on its entering the Channel, their Lordships have deemed it necessary that a small cruising squadron, composed of detachments from your squadron and that under Lord Gardner, should be stationed leagues off Scilly.

The extent of this squadron, their Lordships consider, should consist of three ships of the line and a frigate, to be relieved occasionally from the two squadrons, the senior officer, of course, commanding it; and it is their Lordships' command that you should concert with Lord Gardner the necessary measures for forming it, so as to place the whole under the orders of some discreet officer, changing it in such manner that each station may have an equal share in that duty. The inclosed paper contains the present disposition of Lord Gardner, so

that any of your cruisers which may proceed to the coast of Ireland will have no difficulty in making any communication to him, which may be proper for his Lordship's knowledge, if it should be more convenient to them to go to any other part of his station than to Cork.

On examining the intelligences which have recently been obtained of the state of the enemy's force in the ports of the Atlantic, it appears to consist of the ships mentioned in the inclosed list. You will, however, understand that no positive reliance can be placed in its accuracy, though it is believed to be correct. If at any time you should be informed of the movement of any particular ship, it will be of advantage, for the purpose of checking other intelligence, that their Lordships should be apprised of the names of the ship or ships to which such intelligence may relate.

Supposing the enemy's force not to exceed the extent which I have stated, their Lordships conceive that the keeping the ships of the line constantly at sea will be sufficient for all the purposes at present required, which will enable you to make such an arrangement as to admit of five or six ships being continually in port, for the purpose of refreshing their crews, or obtaining such repairs as the circumstances may render necessary.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 138

SIR ROBT. CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Ushant, 15th October, 1803.

Sir,—In obedience to your orders of the 6th instant received by the Tonnant, I delivered up the charge of the squadron off Ferrol to Captain Sir

Edward Pellew, Bart., on the 10th instant, and have made the best of my way to join you. Nothing has occurred on my passage worthy of notice.

I have the honour to inclose for your information the letters which have passed (under my inspection) between his Excellency the Governor of Ferrol and Captain Prowse, of his Majesty's ship *Sirius*; likewise those between the English Vice-Consul at Corunna and Captain Prowse, and a letter from the English Consul-General at Madrid to me, received as I was leaving the squadron, which I desired Captain Prowse to answer.¹ I have also inclosed a memorandum of the latest intelligence received from Captain Prowse by his boat just returned from Ferrol, but which has not been allowed to land.

Two days prior to my leaving Ferrol the *Sirius* lost her launch when bringing water off from Corunna, owing to a sudden gale. The men were all saved by the *Mary* cutter.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBERT CALDER.

INCLOSURE

*Intelligence received from his Majesty's ship
Sirius.*

10th October, 1803.

Arrived on Monday a courier from Paris to Ferrol with dispatches to the French Admiral.

¹ On October 19th Sir Evan Nepean communicated to Cornwallis an expression of great disapproval of the style of Captain Prowse's correspondence with the Governor of Ferrol, and of the disposition shown to raise trifling and unnecessary difficulties. The correspondence between Captain Prowse and the Governor of Ferrol and the Vice-Consul at Corunna was ordered to be sent in the originals to Mr. Hammond for Lord Hawkesbury's information, with a request for return. They are not with the dispatch.

Yesterday at 8 A.M. spoke a Spanish man-of-war brig from the Havana ; no intelligence. At 8 P.M. boarded a Swede from Alicante, bound to Corunna with salt, which saw a convoy off Cape Finisterre the night before, supposed to be English. Boarded this morning at 2 A.M. a Spanish ship from Cadiz, out twenty-three days. Left in Cadiz a French line-of-battle ship and a frigate. Saw an English line-of-battle ship and frigate cruising.

WILLIAM PROWSE.

No. 139

VICE-CONSUL FERNANDEZ TO SIR EDWARD
PELLEW

Ferrol, 18th October, 1803.

Sir,—By last post I received an official letter from Mr. John Hunter, Consul-General to his Britannic Majesty and Commissioner for all the British prisoners that may arrive in the kingdom of Spain, in which I am requested to forward to you by the first opportunity the following information, viz. :

‘There is a rumour here since Tuesday morning that France has consented to Spain remaining neutral. I have not heard of the conditions, nor do I pretend to say that it is certain, but, as the report bears much credit here, you may write it to Sir Robert Calder.’

This morning’s post brings me another letter from the above, with the following information :

‘There is nothing new in respect to the neutrality, but some people seem now more doubtful of the fact.’

Sir, the inclosed is a letter which I received from the French Admiral last night, with the request to forward the same to the British Admiral.

Sir, give me leave to acquaint you with the

reports of Ferrol, by letters of the 8th instant from Madrid, with orders to the Captain-General of Ferrol to fit all the ship gunboats and floating batteries that are fit for service. Since which time they have been working day and night. There are now twelve gunboats ready for sea and commanders appointed to them. The forts have already received a reinforcement.

This reports much the appearance of war.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ.

INCLOSURE

REAR-ADMIRAL BEDOUT TO THE BRITISH OFFICER IN COMMAND OFF FERROL

A bord de l'Argonaute de la République Française, le
22 Vendémiaire, l'An XII, répondant au 15 8bre 1803.
Rade du Ferrol.

Jacques Bedout, Contre-Amiral commandant une division des forces navales de France, à Monsieur le Général commandant une division des forces navales de Sa Majesté Britannique en croisière devant le Ferrol.

Monsieur le Général,—J'ai l'honneur de vous prévenir que le brick espagnol, La Nuestra Señora de Begoña, Capitaine Larriandaga, va partir pour Bayonne, ayant à son bord soixante-deux passagers français, tous blessés ou infirmes, venant de la colonie de Saint-Domingue, et étrangers au service de la marine. Je vous prie de permettre qu'ils passent librement. L'humanité le réclame pour eux, et je suis persuadé, qu'ayant égard à la position de ces infortunés, vous voudrez bien donner des ordres pour qu'ils puissent aller se rétablir dans leur patrie.

Agréez l'assurance de la très haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.,

BEDOUT.

No. 140

*SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO REAR-ADMIRAL
BEDOUT*

His Britannic Majesty's ship *Tonnant*, off Ferrol,
18th October, 1803.

Sir,—I have been honoured with your letter of the 15th instant, which has been forwarded to me by the British Consul. It contains a request which, stated as it is by you to be that of humanity, I should feel highly gratified to grant; but the nature of my situation, and the very strict orders I am under, will not permit me to think of the indulgence you request—that of French subjects of San Domingo and the colonies being permitted to proceed to France, for the recovery of their healths, by sea, when it is so perfectly in their power to obtain that object by land. And were it in my power to grant free passport through this squadron, it would be considered nugatory by any other officer commanding a king's ship they might meet with at sea, and I should be the cause of leading those unhappy sufferers into increased difficulties instead of relieving them.

I had written a letter to you on the subject of a gross insult offered to a boat of his Britannic Majesty's ship *Sirius*, lying peaceably at the landing place at Ferrol, with only one man in her. A boat from one of your squadron landed by her, a French sailor jumped into her, and drove his boat-hook through her bottom, at which gross and unprovoked aggression four French officers in the boat only laughed. My previous knowledge of you, Sir, in command at Rochefort, convinces me such conduct will be reprehended by you when known. The officers who countenanced this insult were well

aware the power of resentment could not be used where it was offered.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 141

CAPTAIN WOLFE TO CORNWALLIS

L'Aigle, at the Nore, 21st October, 1803.

Sir,—I do myself the honour to acquaint you that, in obedience to your orders to me of the 22nd ult. to proceed in his Majesty's ship under my command to Oporto, on the 27th, being off Vigo, I captured, after a chase of seven hours, l'Alerte, French brig-privateer of fourteen guns, French 6- and 4-pounders, and eighty-four men, commanded by Bernard Benjamin Bizand, on her return from a cruise, having been sixty-five days from Bordeaux. On the 22nd of August, in lat. 41° , long. 29° W., she took the Hart brig, Stephen Cumming master, from Lisbon to Newfoundland; on the 1st of September, in lat. 45° , also the Swift privateer of Guernsey, James Collins master, which was disarmed and returned again to the crew; on the 6th September, in lat. 45° , long. 33° W., the Lord Sheffield, from Trinidad to London; on the 15th, in lat. 41° N., long. 21° W., was engaged in a running fight with a cutter, having one man killed and three wounded; and on the 18th she engaged a brig, which wounded an officer. I feel great pleasure in the capture of this vessel from the great depredation on the British trade committed by her in the late war. Her masts, sails, and rigging are much torn by our shot, and the man at the helm (the only

person suffered upon deck) dangerously wounded. I took the opportunity when off Oporto to land the wounded French officer and five men to the care of the French Consul.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. WOLFE.

No. 142

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd October, 1803.

Sir,—I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 14th instant, inclosing, by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the copy of a paper of intelligence which had been communicated by a person who landed from France the 11th instant. I have put Captain Sutton, who commands the inshore squadron, upon his guard, and I shall use every exertion in my power to intercept the enemy and defeat their design should they take an opportunity of stealing out from Brest. Captain Purvis was off Lorient some short time since, and he states to have observed a ship of the line, with fore and mizen topsails only bent, a frigate, and brig.

At Rochefort there was only a three-decked ship and a frigate, but from intelligence he had by an American there was another three-decked ship expected down from Rochefort to the anchorage at the Ile d'Aix, but I rather suppose it to be only a two-decked ship which has been lately launched at that port.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 143

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 24th October, 1803.

Sir,—The Malta joined me this evening, and the orders and inclosures have been respectively distributed. I have inclosed copies of my last letters by the Dreadnought, and such information as I have collected since the departure of the Fox.

Captain Buller is without any slop shoes, jackets, or blankets, which, as winter is approaching, may be a very serious want, and her crew may suffer unless you, Sir, are good enough to interfere that some additional supply may be sent by the first ship coming here.

I shall keep the Sirius until the Naiad makes her appearance, and write by her when she leaves me.

The Consul Fernandez sends me word that much increased activity prevails since the last dispatches from Madrid, and they worked night and day until the sixteen gunboats were ready.¹ It may be possible that these Spanish ships are fitting to embark Augereau's army. I shall try every means to discover that measure, if it should be adopted, and forward the earliest intelligence of it to you.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 144

CORNWALLIS TO CAPT. SUTTON (MARS)

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 26th October, 1803.

Sir,—The Rambler delivered your letter this morning, and at the same time the Admiralty sent me an account from Jersey, by which it appears the

¹ See No. 139, p. 181.

enemy have many more ships ready at Brest than we are aware of.

The Secretary of the Admiralty informs me that their Lordships have no reason to suppose that the above intelligence is in any degree correct. I am, however, inclined to believe there are more ships fitted at that port than are to be seen from our ships. The account from Jersey is dated the 18th, and from Brest the 10th. It says that Vice-Admiral Truguet, who took the command a few days before, had given orders to twenty-seven ships of war.¹ I do not recollect to have seen a Vice-Admiral's flag in the road.

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 145

SIR E. NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

[*Most Secret.*]

26th October, 1803.

Sir,—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inclose to you a note relative to Messieurs Rosselin and Coquampot, employed on a confidential service; and to signify their Lordships' directions to you to send a proper

¹ The ships under the orders of Truguet or of the naval prefect at Brest, ready, fitting, and repairing, were the *Vengeur*, 120 (afterwards named *Impérial*); the *Républicain* and *Invincible*, 110's; the *Foudroyant* and *Alexandre*, 80's; and the *Impétueux*, *Eole*, *Ulysse*, *Diomède*, *Conquérant*, *Aquilon*, *Jean Bart*, *Wattignies*, *Tourville*, *Vétéran*, *Cassard*, *Jupiter*, *Finistère*, *Batave*, and *Brave*, 74's. With these twenty ships of the line (of which only eight were actually under Truguet's orders on November 12th) were the *Océan*, 120, under extensive repair, and the *Alliance* and *Patriote*, 74, with others in bad condition, as well as the frigates and corvettes *Comète*, *Indienne*, *Valeureuse*, *Volontaire*, *Félicité*, *Vulcain*, and *Diligente*, and several brigs and other vessels.

vessel to the part of the coast therein described, to receive them on board, and convey them to the first port she can reach in England, directing her commander to furnish them on their arrival with such a sum of money as will enable them to defray the expenses of their journey to London, and to draw on me for the amount.

I have their Lordships' further commands to acquaint you that it does not appear to them to be necessary that the gentlemen above mentioned should communicate to the captain of the vessel which may receive them on board the objects of their mission ; though at the same time it will be right that they should put him in possession of any intelligence they may have procured of the proceedings or designs of the enemy which may be proper for your knowledge.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,
EVAN NEPEAN.

No. 146

*SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO LORD GARDNER
AT CORK*

[*Secret.*]

Admiralty Office, 26th October, 1803.

My Lord,—Your Lordship will be informed by my letter to you of the 14th instant of the intelligence which had been received of the preparations of the enemy at Brest ; and I have now the honour of acquainting your Lordship that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, being of opinion, considering the source from whence that intelligence was obtained, that little doubt can be entertained of its authenticity, have sent directions to the Hon. Admiral Cornwallis to pay particular attention to

¹ See No. 115, p. 145.

this object of the enemy, and in the event of the enemy's getting out of Brest and proceeding to Ireland, to follow it with the force under his command.

As it appears to their Lordships to be advantageous to the public service that the squadron off Ferrol, during the winter season, when the westerly winds may be expected to prevail, should, whenever occasion may require, proceed to Bantry Bay to replenish its provisions and stores, and that whenever the circumstances may render it necessary to relieve any part of that squadron or to reinforce it (which can more readily be done from thence than from the ports in the Channel) recourse should be had to the squadron employed on the coast of Ireland. Their Lordships have been pleased to place the four ships of the line named in the margin,¹ now serving under your command, under the orders of Admiral Cornwallis; and I have it in command from their Lordships to signify their direction to you to send instructions to the senior officer of the said ships to take a station between Cape Clear and the Durseys, and remain on that station until he receives orders from the Admiral for his further proceedings, unless from the arrival of any force of the enemy on any other part of the coast he shall find it necessary to proceed in pursuit of it.

I have their Lordships' further commands to acquaint your Lordship that a proper proportion of stores and provisions will immediately be sent to Bantry Bay for the supply of the above squadron.²

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

¹ Thunderer, Majestic, Magnificent, Ganges.

² It is interesting to compare the orders here given with those contained in a draft secret letter from Sir Evan Nepean to Cornwallis, dated October 13, which is included in this volume (No. 137, p. 174), printed from a rough and obscure original. It had then been the intention to place the ships at Ferrol under the orders of Lord Gardner.

[The expected orders of Cornwallis herein referred to were issued to Captain Jervis (Magnificent), senior officer off Cape Clear, on October 31st. They were in pursuance of instructions to the Admiral, given on October 26, and contained the dispositions for relieving and reinforcing the ships off Ferrol from those cruising on the coast of Ireland, with information as to the supply of stores and provisions at Berehaven for the purpose. 'The ships so stationed upon the coast of Ireland may, upon the appearance of an enemy's squadron, be able to keep them in check, if not actually attack them, before I can, with the rest of the squadron at that time with me (or those from off Ferrol, as circumstances may happen), be able to get up with them.' The order concluded with an injunction as to vigilance, and instructed Captain Jervis to act in conjunction with Sir Edward Pellew if the latter should follow to Ireland the squadron he was at the time watching off Ferrol. On the same day (October 31st) an order was issued to Pellew in the same sense, instructing him to follow the enemy's ships, if these should escape from Ferrol, and their destination should be discovered to be Ireland. Cornwallis also inclosed a sealed rendezvous in case the ships should escape from Brest, and he not be able to bring them to action or discover their destination.

Everything seemed at the time to point to an impending descent upon Ireland. On October 22 Lord Gardner had reported a rumoured landing of the French in Sligo, and on that information, which was soon ascertained to be unfounded, the Magnificent, Majestic, Ganges, and Argus sloop had got under way. The Admiralty disapproved of the Galatea having been ordered to the northward, since this, with a previous order given to the Spitfire, would leave the south and west coasts unprotected.]

No. 147

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 27th October, 1803.

Sir,—I have had the honour of receiving your letter, dated the 21st instant, inclosing intelligence of the French force at Brest, sent for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty from Jersey, at the same time stating that their Lordships do not believe it to be in any degree correct. I request that you will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships that no Vice-Admiral's flag has appeared in the Road of Brest; that one ship had lately gone into the Road, which from observation Captain Sutton tells me they take to be a frigate, but probably it may be the Jean Bart, ready to come out near a month ago, according to the intelligence received from a Dane about that time, which I had the honour of inclosing for their Lordships' information. There were then, by his account, some other ships getting forward. I have, therefore, thought it advisable to recall the Conqueror and Minotaur, which I had before mentioned were cruising off Rochefort, as it requires several two-decked ships to relieve those with Sir Edward Pellew, and to keep a squadron of observation inshore off Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 148

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 29th October, 1803.

1st November, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to send you by the Sirius Captain Prowse's letter on the recapture of the ship

Perseverance (on board of which were General Baird and suite, and Captain Evans of the Navy); also the original letters, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, from Mr. Hunter, British Consul at Madrid.¹

The information brought off last night by Mr. Silk is important, and we are much indebted to him for his exertions.

We see three of the French ships, with top-gallant sails bent, and they are to run over by night to Corunna; the distance is so short I have scarce any hope of stopping them. They will sail doubtless from Corunna the first dirty blowing south-west wind, and, I fear, escape our utmost vigilance.

From the circumstances of their receiving no men, having no troops, nor supplied with much stores, I conjecture they must be going to France. I shall therefore, if such an untoward event does happen, push on for Lorient, Rochefort, and your flag, sending to you, the moment their escape is known to me, by the frigate, as it is possible they may take the route for Brest, or even Cancale Bay, to cover their embarkations in the Channel.

November 1.—The *Acasta* having appeared on the 29th, I took her for the *Naiad*, and wrote the above to go by the *Sirius*; it now goes by the *Mary* cutter, the *Sheerness* having arrived last night.

The enemy are watching a moment to go over to Corunna, which the first dirty day will give them, in spite of me; at present we are between the ports.

You will observe, Sir, that the water of the *Impétueux*, as well as her provisions, is getting low; I shall feed her only as occasion requires.

¹ One of these inclosures is given here. Another is a scrap saying there was no truth in rumours, for the Spaniards, though preparing, were in want of men, stores, and necessaries. The third inclosure relates to sickness at Malaga.

The Sirius is almost a wreck in sails, and when bad weather comes, must, I fear, be sent away without waiting relief.

Major-General Baird was so anxious to get home that I have consented to his taking a passage with Captain Evans, in the Mary, although contrary to your directions. I hope you will not be displeased at it.

I herewith send the state and condition of the squadron, and have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE A

CAPT. PROWSE TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Sirius, 28th October, 1803.

Sir,—I have the pleasure to inform you that at daylight yesterday morning I chased a strange sail to the westward. On nearing her I perceived two boats ahead towing her in for the land. At one o'clock I took possession, she proving to be the English ship Perseverance, of London, Wm. Stevens, master, laden with oil, last from St. Helena, having been captured on the 16th instant in lat. $48^{\circ}50'$, long. $16^{\circ}30'$, by the Vaillant, privateer of Bordeaux.

It is with peculiar satisfaction I add the recapture has liberated General Baird and suite, Captain Evans, late of H.M. sloop Hobart, and several other gentlemen, passengers from St. Helena.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

WM. PROWSE.

INCLOSURE B

CONSUL-GENERAL HUNTER TO SIR R. CALDER

Madrid, 22nd October, 1803.

Sir,—I did myself the honour of writing you the 1st instant, and I have now to inclose a narrative of all the particulars which have as yet come to my

knowledge respecting the epidemical disorder at Malaga. This letter goes to Ferrol, to be sent off by Mr. Fernandez, and I send a duplicate of the narrative to Mr. Morrogh at Corunna, to be dispatched to you by the first good opportunity. I shall continue to communicate to you everything that passes on this unpleasant subject; and I take the liberty of suggesting to you the propriety of your conveying the information to England; as, although I have written it to Lord Hawkesbury, both by way of Lisbon and of Bilbao, still too much pains cannot be taken to guard against the miscarriage of intelligence of such importance.

The French privateers still continue their ravages on the western coast of this Peninsula.

On the 7th instant arrived in Vigo the brig Peggy, Captain O'Loughlin, with 190 pipes of port, bound for Ireland, captured by the schooner Représailles of Bordeaux.

On the 13th instant, the brig Britannia, Captain Hattersley, from Falmouth for Oporto, was sent into Vigo by the French row-boat Determinado, Captain Magnes, of San Jean de Luz, carrying two swivels and twenty-two men.

A ship in ballast, named the Forty-Second, from Liverpool, bound to Oporto, taken by the row-boat l'Audacieux of Bayonne, eight leagues from Vianna, is arrived at Carril.

It is very much to be wished that measures were taken to check these depredations.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JOHN HUNTER.

Three French frigates are said to have escaped from Toulon. The Agincourt and Maidstone gave advice of this at Cadiz on the 15th instant.¹

¹ Nelson to Elliot ^{to sickn}, October 8: 'Two French frigates

INCLOSURE C

Information.

30th October.

Mr. Silk, master of an English ship detained at Ferrol these sixteen months, came off in a small boat last night, and states the French squadron to have completed their rigging and received on board wine and provisions, and bent sails, in order to proceed to Corunna, which he says they mean to do in the night, the moment they can.

The *Argonaute*, the Admiral's ship, from not being coppered was so worm-eaten as to be very leaky and unfit for sea. She was therefore lying with topmasts struck, and not going with the others. Application had been made for leave to dock her, and it was said her crew was to complete the other ships.

The squadron had received no men from France, and he believes are short of stores, as he knew their demand for sails, cables, and rope had been refused. It was said they had orders to sail from Corunna the first favourable opportunity.

Mr. Silk counted in the arsenal two three-deckers, ten two-deckers, and five frigates, of which are fitting one of three decks, six of two decks, and four frigates, and sixteen gun and mortar boats, as last reported.

The garrison of Ferrol has been increased by regulars and militia to above five thousand men.

The *Oldenbarneveldt* was extremely sickly, had have had a narrow escape. They have been chased twice ; once into Corsica with the troops by the *Agincourt*, 64, and on Sunday last by two frigates, *Active* and *Phœbe*, into *St. Tropez* ; but these fellows will not fight if they can help it.—*Dispatches and Letters*, v. 239.

near 200 men ill, and was not allowed to land them for fear of contagion.

November 1.—We learn to-day, by a vessel out of Ferrol, the *Argonaute* is totally unrigged, and her crew either divided to the other French, or gone on board the Dutch ship, which is ready for sea and unmoored, as well as the other three French.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 149

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN SUTTON (MARS)

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral
of the Blue, &c.*

The squadron inshore, acting under your orders, will be reinforced as ships arrive, and the strictest watch is to be kept on the port of Brest.

The squadron with me will keep its station off Ushant as long as possible, but should it, by stress of weather, be forced to the eastward, the greatest care will be taken not to be driven beyond Torbay. And you are, with the ships under your orders, should it blow hard from the westward, to take shelter, if possible under such circumstances, in Douarnenez Bay, if you can in time reach that anchorage—rather than be driven to the eastward. Should the enemy's squadron at Brest escape your vigilance, you are immediately to join me with the ships under your orders; unless you should be able to discover the enemy, and are of opinion, by following them, you may be able to retard their progress, though not strong enough to attack them until you are joined by me. And you are, in that and in all cases, to give me immediate information of the event, by sending as many frigates or vessels as you may deem necessary to insure the intelligence

reaching me as expeditiously as possible, to enable me to follow you without a moment's loss of time.

Given, &c., off Ushant, October 30, 1803.

W. CORNWALLIS.

[Captain Baker, of the *Phoenix*, was ordered to take this letter to Captain Sutton inshore, and to follow his orders. On November 6th Cornwallis issued a general instruction to Collingwood, Calder, and the captains and commanders of vessels, to the effect that, if it should blow hard for a length of time from the westward, he should put into Torbay, and get to sea again as soon as the weather should abate.]

No. 150

CAPTAIN ELPHINSTONE TO CORNWALLIS

Diamond, 1st November, 1803.

Yesterday evening I stood in to Basque Roads, and saw a three-deck ship and frigate lying within Ile d'Aix. They had topgallant yards across. A rear-admiral's flag was flying on board the three-deck ship. They were, apparently, perfectly ready for sea.

THOS. ELPHINSTONE.

No. 151

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 5th November, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in answer to that part of their instructions contained in your letter dated the 26th of last month, which was received by

the Rose cutter the 29th, the ships in the margin¹ are those I imagine their Lordships allude to when they are pleased to say I am to have thirteen ships off Brest, and that then there will be quite sufficient to send ships into Plymouth for the purpose of replenishing, and enough to watch the ports of Lorient and Rochefort. I should conceive that, allowing five ships off Ferrol, another may be reckoned for relief.

The Ardent was sent to carry the orders off Cape Clear, then to Sir Edward Pellew, and to relieve the Impétueux—which ship has been the longest out—after which they will be relieved by the ships from Ireland.

I sent the Rambler on the 27th of last month with orders for the Conqueror and Minotaur to join me, which ships were cruising off Rochefort, but, from the intelligence at that time sent to me by their Lordships, I judged it proper to recall them.

Two of the ships named in the margin, the Prince of Wales and Plantagenet, are now at Plymouth to replenish. The Royal Sovereign and Defiance are very low indeed, and to go in immediately for supplies. The Dreadnought and Colossus I shall be obliged to send as soon as the wind comes to the westward, or I can possibly spare them.

I imagine their Lordships include the Neptune and others who have received orders, but have not yet been able to join me; some of them will, no doubt, soon arrive, and I shall in the meantime do the best I can with what are here. But I believe their Lordships will perceive that I have not at

¹ Ville de Paris, San Josef, Royal Sovereign, Prince of Wales, Dreadnought, Venerable, Mars, Spencer, Colossus, Plantagenet, Defiance, Culloden, Ardent, Conqueror, Minotaur.

present ships to spare to watch any of the ports in the Bay.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 152

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN SUTTON (MARS)

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 7th November, 1803.

Sir,—I received yesterday letters from Sir Edward Pellew, by which it appears three of the French ships at Ferrol, and the Dutch sixty-four, are ready to join the Duguay-Trouin at Corunna, and, he imagines, to proceed to sea the moment the weather admits of a favourable opportunity, probably for Brest. I give you this information to put you upon your guard.

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 153

*CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN MOORE*¹
(INDEFATIGABLE)

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral
of the Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed to cruise in the ship you command from Lorient to Isle Dieu

¹ Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir Graham) Moore, a younger brother of General Sir John Moore, entered the navy in 1777, and served in the West Indies, on the North American station, and in the Channel. He was lieutenant of the Crown at the relief of Gibraltar by Howe, and in the engagement off Cape Spartel, October 1782. After further service on the North American station, he commanded the Syren and Melampus in the North Sea, 1794-5, with much success against privateers. He was on

for the purpose of intercepting the enemy's vessels, and to endeavour to gain all the information you are able from vessels you may speak with of the proceedings and designs of the enemy ; and should you obtain any intelligence which you may deem of importance for me to be immediately informed of, you are directly to return with it, or send me one of the ships named in the margin [Hussar and Aigle], to communicate the same to me (whose commanders are directed to follow your orders). And you are to transmit, by every opportunity that may offer, your proceedings, with any observations you have been able to make.

In the event of your meeting with any squadron of the enemy's ships, with transports and troops, you are to endeavour to keep sight of them, if possible, until you have ascertained their destination, upon which you are, without a moment's loss of time, to join me with the information, or act as before directed, should either of those ships be with you.

During your cruise you are to afford every protection and assistance to the trade of his Majesty's subjects.

Several ships belonging to the squadron under my command are cruising for the purpose of blocking up some ships of the enemy at Ferrol. Should, therefore, the expedition expected to sail from Brest

the coast of Ireland, under Sir Borlase Warren, in 1798 ; fought in the action against the French, October 12 ; and two days later captured the *Resolve* (forty), with 500 men on board. He returned invalided from the West Indies in August 1801, but on the outbreak of fresh hostilities commissioned the *Indefatigable* (forty-six) for the blockade under Cornwallis. As we shall see, he was in command of the frigate squadron which intercepted the Spanish ships in October 1804. His later service was very distinguished, and he died November 25, 1843. See *Memoir of Sir Graham Moore*, by Sir Robert Gardiner.

escape without my being able to fall in with them, and you should observe them in force steering that way, you will also endeavour to give timely notice of their approach to the officer commanding those ships, which at present amount to six of the line.

And you are to continue upon this service two months, at the expiration of which time you are to join me off Ushant, or wherever else you may learn I am with the squadron.

Given, &c., off Ushant,
November 10, 1803.

[Captain Wolfe, of the *Aigle*, was instructed to carry this order to Captain Moore, who was cruising off the Penmarcks, to receive his directions, and then to proceed off Rochefort, there to blockade the port, and, if the enemy should be observed, to proceed as Captain Moore was directed. Like orders were issued to Captain Wilkinson, of the *Hussar*, and Captain Campbell, of the *Doris*, with instructions to keep a particular watch on Lorient, where a strong force was reported to be getting ready, and to place themselves under the orders of Captain Moore. Cornwallis's anxiety as to the watching of the ports in the Bay was relieved by the arrival of other vessels, and he made fresh dispositions during the month.

No. 154

CAPTAIN WALLIS TO CORNWALLIS

Naiad, off Ferrol, 14th November, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that early on the morning of the 23rd ult., being in lat. $49^{\circ} 10'$, long. $16^{\circ} 35' W.$, I saw a ship ahead, standing to the

westward, on the same tack the Naiad was upon. I immediately gave chase, after which she tacked, took in her topgallant sails, and stood towards us. At half-past nine she was so close to our lee bow as to make out distinctly what we were. She then tacked, made all sail, and stood from us. I perceived her to be a regular frigate-built ship, with a quarter-deck, carrying six guns on a side thereon, and apparently twelve guns on a side on her main deck. She is very square rigged, with immense large topgallant sails and driver; bright yellow sides, with a small black streak over, black bow, and a projecting figure-head. I have no doubt of its being one of the enemy's cruisers, who has the greatest confidence of his sailing. I continued the chase after him, with as heavy a press of sail as ever was carried on any ship, with all the lee guns bowsed in, as it blew extremely hard. At noon I was pretty confident I should take him, having gained considerably by carrying through a squall, but after that I did not perceive we gained anything on him; my greatest hope, and indeed only chance, was that he would carry something away. During a chase of 146 miles he never was more than from two to three miles from us. A dark night, and thick weather coming on, effected his escape. I was no doubt at the expiration of my time, limited by your orders to cruise; but the whole of the Jamaica convoy was home, from the winds having been for a considerable time previous very favourable for them, and—from information gained by a vessel we spoke some days before, who saw them in lat. 46° with a fair wind—strong gales of wind and squally weather having prevailed, I cruised about twelve days after the expiration of my orders, in hopes of falling in with the before-mentioned ship, though with little

prospect of taking him, unless by accident in out-carrying him ; and I trust my conduct on this occasion will meet your approbation.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES WALLIS.

[On November 20th sealed orders were issued to Captain Durham, *Defiance*, directing him to take the *Goliath*, Captain Brisbane, under his orders, and to proceed off Rochefort to observe the enemy. He was to gain all possible information as to the armaments of the enemy and their intended operations, communicating either with Cornwallis or the officer in command off Ferrol, according to circumstances. If he fell in with an enemy's squadron with transports and troops, he was to ascertain their destination and report. There were six sail of the line off Ferrol and Corunna. But Captain Durham was not to leave his station unless the enemy's force should actually sail, and it should appear, from the certain destination of the force, that no time should be lost in communicating with Cornwallis, Pellew, or the officer in command of the line-of-battle ships off Cape Clear. Like orders were issued on November 23rd to Captain Patrick Campbell, *Doris*, to proceed off the Penmarcks, following the orders of Captain Moore, *Indefatigable*, and occasionally to stretch off Lorient, 'where a considerable armament is reported to be getting forward.' The usual routine of relieving the ships and of protecting the trade was pursued. The *Impérieuse* was despatched to Oporto (November 26th) to bring home the convoy. Collingwood took the *Venerable* into Cawsand Bay.]

No. 155

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Cape Ortegal, 21st November, 1803.

Sir,—After the departure of the *Mary* cutter the weather very soon became changeable. From the 5th at night, when we were blown off, until this day we have experienced constant hard gales of wind, from south-west to the north-west. It was my intention to have taken shelter in Vares Bay, where I sent the *Impétueux* to furnish the *Sirius* with water; but having lost some of our sails in the night, we were driven to leeward, and never able to regain our station until yesterday, when I met the *Sirius* off Cape Prior, and had hoped, although the wind was dead on the shore, we should be able to reconnoitre Ferrol, in which, however, we were disappointed by its coming on to blow.

I learned from the *Dragon* that the *Spencer* and *Naiad* were on the coast, as well as the *Ardent*, charged with your dispatches, and that the *Impétueux* had been sent home by Captain Stopford. The *Malta* and *Dragon* were in sight to leeward yesterday; the *Spartiate* we have not seen since the 14th, and I understood none of them have been able to reconnoitre since the 5th, so that I can give you no satisfactory account of the state of the enemy, but I am inclined to think that the ships in Ferrol are still in port, unless with great risk and activity they got out on the 19th, when we had the wind for six or eight hours in the afternoon, after a violent gale at north-west, suddenly change to north-east and south-east, and thence it again returned to south-west.

The ships in Corunna may have sailed on any day they chose since we left it.

It now blows a hard gale at south-west, but as the Sirius is so short, and no prospect of our gaining ground to windward without a change of weather, I have sent her off without waiting to procure a report, meaning to forward one by the Dragon, when I meet with your orders by the Ardent, and the weather will permit.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 156

CAPTAIN MAITLAND TO CORNWALLIS¹

Boadicea, at Sea, 25th November, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that last night, Cape Finisterre bearing N.E., distance eight leagues, his Majesty's ship under my command captured the French national lugger le Vautour, commanded by Monsieur Bigot, lieutenant de vaisseau, forty-three days from San Domingo, having a commissaire de marine on board, charged with dispatches from General Rochambeau, at Cape Français, *to Bonaparte, which were thrown overboard before we came up with her.*² She is a very fast sailing vessel, coppered, and pierced for sixteen guns, had twelve 6-pounders mounted, ten of which were thrown overboard in chase, and ninety-two men on board.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JNO. MAITLAND.

¹ Covering letter to the Admiralty, dated off Ushant, December 10th, 1803.

² The words in italics are crossed out in the original, and were omitted in the letter as published in the *Gazette*. General Rochambeau had succeeded to the command in San Domingo on the death of General le Clerc from yellow fever.

No. 157

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 27th November, 1803.

Sir,—It was not until yesterday in my power to regain my station so as to reconnoitre the enemy's force at Ferrol and Corunna. I have now the pleasure to inclose a report by the Dragon, which ship is so reduced in water and provisions as to induce me to send her in to replenish.

The excessive bad weather for the last three weeks was in part detailed in my letter of the 21st by the Sirius.

I had the honour of receiving all your dispatches by the Ardent, and the squadron all joined here in a few hours after the wind changed to the northward, except the Spartiate, who joined to-day.

Lieutenant Rowed, in the Sheerness, was enabled to keep his ground by following my recommendations of anchoring whenever he could, and by this means you will be secured, Sir, in the early knowledge of the escape of the enemy should we again be blown off the coast, as I have directed him in that event to look into Vares, and expend only twenty-four hours in seeking me before he proceeds for your flag. I have also recommended to Captain Wallis to adopt the same plan in bad weather, by anchoring in Betanzos Bay.

The ships have all suffered in their canvas, but not in their spars, and the crews, from bad weather and bad clothing, have been thrown back, which a few days' fresh beef would restore, but I fear by relieving the ships from Ireland that is not to be expected.

The secret rendezvous, and your orders, have been delivered (with the exception of the two in-

closed letters), and you may be assured of my strict attention to them, in the event of the enemy's ships escaping our vigilance.

Should they once get to Corunna (which I will use every possible means to prevent), their escape from thence with a south-west wind will be at their option; but I still hold my opinion that a port in France is their destination, from their incapacity to proceed on any expedition unless troops and sailors are marched through Spain to join them, information of which I shall hope to obtain.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE

State of the enemy's force in Ferrol and Corunna, as reconnoitred by Sir E. Pellew, Bart., his Majesty's ship Tonnant, 26 November, 1803.

Ferrol, French	{	3 line, ready for sea.	
		Argonaute, 74, unrigged, main-mast out, going into dock.	
Ferrol, Dutch	{	1 brig corvette, ready for sea.	
		Oldenbarneveldt, 64, rigged, but condemned by survey as unfit for sea.	
Corunna, French	{	1 line	} as before, ready for
		2 frigates	
			sea.

We had a boat yesterday at Ferrol, and we learn that the French sailors had been paid the day before two months' wages, and were all on shore drunk; that they were to proceed to Corunna as soon as possible. The seamen were said to be averse to sailing until they received more men from France. The report of 1,500 being on their route from Bayonne still existed, but discredited.

The seven sail of the Spanish line fitting in the arsenal were at a stand, and remained with only their lower masts rigged; it was not known if this proceeded from orders or want of stores; perhaps in part from both.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 158

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 28th November, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I am informed of the arrival of the ship and vessels named in the margin¹ at Plymouth, they having been forced to bear up in the gale on the 22nd, from losses and having sustained some damage, the Dreadnought without her foreyard.

It having been my intention to send her very shortly in to replenish, I directed Captain Purvis to exchange foreyards with the Prince of Wales, that of the latter ship being complained of.

I am sorry to learn from Captain Purvis that, after it was alongside the Dreadnought, the hawser by which it had been towed to her from the Prince of Wales broke, and the yard drifted away to windward; the boats were sent after it, but night coming on, with dark squally weather, he deemed it proper to recall them.

The Rambler was obliged to throw ten of her guns overboard, according to the report made to me by Captain Innes.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

¹ Dreadnought, Rambler, Atalante, Fox, cutter.

No. 159.

CAPTAIN HOTHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Impérieuse, at Sea, 30th November, 1803.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that his Majesty's ship under my command has this day recaptured the *Britannia* of London, a South Sea man taken on the 24th instant by *la Bellone*, French privateer of Bordeaux.

I am, &c.,

H. HOTHAM.¹

[On November 30 Cornwallis requested Sir John Colpoys to hasten the cutters and other vessels which were to join the squadron. The *Nimble* cutter had been added some time before, but he had seen nothing of her. The *Pickle* had defects, and he had sent her into port. He would probably have to send in several directions, and at the time had with him, or inshore, only the little *Nimrod* for the purpose.]

¹ Captain (afterwards Vice-Admiral Sir Henry) Hotham (1777–1833) entered the navy in 1790 on board the *Princess Royal*, flying the flag of his uncle, William Lord Hotham. In the *Victory*, Lord Hood's flag-ship, he was present at the occupation of Toulon and in the operations in Corsica. After much service in the Mediterranean he commanded the *Immortalité* frigate from 1799 to 1801, and cruised with success in the Bay of Biscay. Appointed to the *Impérieuse* in 1803, he was turned over to the *Révolutionnaire* in the following March. In 1805 he was present in Strachan's action, and was afterwards engaged in the Channel blockade. In February 1809, being with Rear-Admiral Stopford's squadron, he drove ashore three French frigates from the roadstead of the *Sables d'Olonne*, of which one was destroyed. He rendered very brilliant service in 1812, when he drove ashore and destroyed two French frigates. He was afterwards in command on the North American and Mediterranean stations. The *Bellerophon* was under his orders when Napoleon surrendered on board.

No. 160

CAPTAIN WOOD TO CORNWALLIS

Acasta, at Sea off Ushant, 3rd December, 1803.

Sir,—In pursuance of your orders, at daybreak on October 2, in latitude $48^{\circ} 19'$ N., and longitude $21^{\circ} 30'$ W., we fell in with, and after a chase of forty-five hours captured, the French privateer l'Aventure of Bordeaux, of twenty guns and 144 men, with her two prizes, the Royal Edward and Saint Mary's Planter, both of the Jamaica convoy. This privateer was lying to, to take possession of the Jane, another of the convoy, and a fourth in sight.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
J. A. Wood.

No. 161

CORNWALLIS TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of
the Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed immediately to proceed, in the Prince of Wales, off Cape Clear, to take under your direction the ships named in the margin,¹ which are now cruising there, with any others that may hereafter be sent to you to be employed upon that part of the coast of Ireland, with a view to intercept any small detachment of the enemy's ships sent for the purpose of making a descent.

¹ Magnificent, Ganges, Majestic, Thunderer. The instructions to Sir Robert Calder were practically identical with those issued to Captain Jervis, of the Magnificent, senior officer off Cape Clear, on October 31st, 1803. See p. 190.

And it appearing to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the ships employed off Ferrol may be with greater ease relieved or reinforced from the ships detached to cruise upon the coast of Ireland than from the squadron here, they have directed provisions and stores to be sent to Berehaven for the purpose of supplying those ships, instead of their being sent to Plymouth, and have directed me to relieve or reinforce the said squadron off Ferrol from the said ships, or any others which may hereafter be sent to join them. Orders have been sent by me to the senior officer of the ships off Ferrol accordingly, and you are to cause those sent to Ireland to be relieved with all possible expedition.¹

It is intended that the ships so stationed upon the coast of Ireland may, upon the appearance of an enemy's squadron, be able to keep them in check, if not actually attack them, before I can, with the rest of the squadron at that time with me (or those from off Ferrol, who are directed to follow, should the enemy make their escape from thence, as circumstances may happen), be able to get up with them.

You are therefore, as may appear to you most for the King's service, from intelligence received at the time, having always in view the preventing a landing of the enemy in Ireland, to be very vigilant

¹ Sir Edward Pellew, in the *Tonnant*, senior officer off Ferrol, had been informed concerning the ships off Cape Clear, the system of relief intended, and the stores at Berehaven, in an order of October 31, 1803. On December 4th Cornwallis wrote to him concerning the arrangement. Sir Robert Calder, on his arrival on the coast of Ireland, was to send to Ferrol a vessel to relieve the *Spartiate*, which was to go to Berehaven to report and replenish. Calder was also furnished with the dates on which the line-of-battle ships off Ferrol—the *Tonnant*, *Spartiate*, *Malta*, *Ardent*, and *Spencer*—had last been replenished. See Nepean's letter to Lord Gardner, No. 146, p. 188.

in the execution of this service, and to send me immediate notice of any enemy's squadron which may be seen upon the coast, or any other information you may deem of importance, taking care to keep the ships under your orders in constant readiness for service from the supplies to be obtained at Berehaven,

Given on board the *Ville de Paris*, off Ushant, the 5th December, 1803.

No. 162

State of the force in Brest water, as viewed by the Plantagenet from abreast of Camaret Bay on December 6, 1803:

	No.
Ships of the line	8
(One vice-admiral and two rear-admirals)	
Frigates	5
Ship corvette	1
Brig corvettes	4
Ship corvette, stripped	1

and one large ship, supposed to be a hulk.

M. DE COURCY.

No. 163

SIR R. CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, 7th December, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I have received your very obliging letter, with your orders. They shall be put in force to the utmost of my abilities, and should the enemy escape your vigilance, I trust we shall be so fortunate as to check them from doing any great mischief before your arrival.

I am much obliged to you for the assistance of

the Rambler to take the people and things to the ships off Ferrol, and for bringing my new master to me to Ireland.

I have the honour of wishing you your health and every possible success, and remain ever,

My dear Sir,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,
ROBT. CALDER.¹

No. 164

CAPTAIN DURHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Defiance, at Sea, 9th December, 1803.

Sir,—I have not been able to receive any intelligence since I have been upon this station, except that the three-decker is still at the Isle Dieu. I have no reason to believe anything has escaped since I have been here and trust that nothing will escape during the time I have the charge.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

P. C. DURHAM.²

¹ Original in the possession of Colonel Cornwallis West.

² Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir Philip Charles Henderson Calderwood) Durham (1763-1845) was a lieutenant and officer of the watch with Kempenfelt in the Royal George when she went down at Spithead through the rottenness of her hull, August 29, 1782, and was among the saved. His service was long and eventful. After taking part in Warren's expedition to Quiberon Bay in July 1795, and against the French on the Irish coast in 1798, he was employed actively up to the peace, and was moved from the Windsor Castle to the Defiance, 74, in 1803. He was present in Calder's action, and, though selected by the Admiral to come home in order to give testimony in his favour, elected to remain, fought, and was slightly wounded at Trafalgar, and yet was back in time to give evidence at the trial. His later service was distinguished.

No. 165

CAPTAIN BRISBANE TO CAPTAIN DURHAM

Goliath, at Sea, 9th December, 1803.

Sir,—In obedience to your signal of yesterday I proceeded inshore with his Majesty's ship Goliath to reconnoitre, and, having discovered a convoy of the enemy standing along the coast, the necessary arrangements were made in the evening with the two six-oared cutters of the Goliath to intercept them, and the command was given to Lieutenant Kent, who, with Lieutenant Jones, and Lieutenant Langston of the Marines, volunteered their services on this occasion. I have much satisfaction in informing you this service has been performed in a most gallant manner under the batteries of Les Sables d'Olonne. They succeeded in driving part of the convoy on shore, notwithstanding the heavy fire from the batteries and gunboat, and in taking possession of an English brig, pierced for fourteen guns, mounting six, captured some days since by a French privateer. In this latter service I have deeply to regret that Lieutenants Kent and Langston were severely wounded, with one marine; but, when I consider the daring enterprise of those officers, seamen, and marines in boarding a brig, and carrying her when protected by the batteries, a gun-brig, and cutter, and opposed by forty French soldiers, who were on board and prepared to receive them, I must feel happy the loss was not more serious. I have to request you will please to represent to the Commander-in-Chief the merit of those gallant officers, seamen, and marines.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

C. BRISBANE.¹

¹ Captain (afterwards Rear-Admiral Sir Charles) Brisbane was present as a boy at the defeat of the Spaniards off Cape St.

Messrs. Stuart and Grierson were the midshipmen in the boats on this occasion.

The enemy had about fifteen killed and wounded.¹

No. 166.

CAPTAIN DURHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Defiance, at Sea, 12th December, 1803.

Sir,—I beg to inform you that on perusing the log-book belonging to the French prize-master, found on board the recaptured ship *Flying Fish*, I find that the *Vaillant*, privateer of thirty-six guns, of Bordeaux, and the *Brave*, of sixteen guns, of St. Malo, are cruising in lat. 47° 30', long. 9° 13', where they are committing great depredations on our own commerce.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
P. C. DURHAM.

Vincent, and at the relief of Gibraltar, 1788. He was actively employed in the Mediterranean as a lieutenant, and was employed ashore at Toulon, San Fiorenzo, and Bastia, at which last place, when under the immediate orders of Nelson, he lost an eye from a severe wound in the head. After service in the West Indies and at the Cape he was in command of the *Doris* in Cornwallis's squadron off Brest in 1801, and was nearly lost in the *Goliath* in a hurricane on his way home to serve in the new blockade. During the blockade he displayed great enterprise and courage, as will be seen in the second volume of this book, and his subsequent service was eventful. He died in December 1829.

¹ The following dispatch from Admiral Martin, naval prefect at Rochefort, to Decrès, records an incident ascribed by him to December 10th: 'Le 18 de ce mois (Frimaire) un vaisseau de ligne anglais a donné la chasse à un convoi de bâtiments marchands qui, partant de la rade de Saint-Martin, se rendait aux Sables d'Olonne sous l'escorte de la canonnière l'Isle Dieu et du cutter l'Actif. Le vaisseau n'ayant rien pu faire s'est établi à l'entrée du Pertuis Breton, vis-à-vis les portes. S'il persiste à garder ce poste, nos communications sont absolument interrompues.' (*Arch. de la Marine*, B.B.³, 212, f. 222). Lieutenants Kent and Langston died from the wounds they received in recapturing the brig on December 8th.

No. 167

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of
the Blue, &c.*

[An order in identical terms with that to Captain Sutton, October 30 (No. 149, p. 196), in regard to the command of the inshore squadron, the advantage of sheltering in Douarnenez Bay, and the course to be taken in case the enemy should escape.]

Given, &c., off Ushant, 14th December, 1803.

[Sir Thomas Graves had been appointed to this duty on December 6th. The ships had been driven to leeward, and, the Foudroyant appearing to sail well, he was directed to deliver bullocks and stores to the Ville de Paris and others, and then to make all expedition off Brest to watch the enemy. He was to keep the Plantagenet with him, but the Dragon, just returned from Ferrol, was in want of supplies. On December 15 the Sirius, and on the 19th the Impétueux, were ordered to proceed inshore ; and on the latter date Captain Sutton was directed to take the Mars to Cawsand Bay to replenish and refresh. On December 30th the captains of the Mars, Conqueror, Colossus, and Minotaur were directed to follow the orders of Sir Thomas Graves, but the gales made it impossible for the ships for some time to reach their station. See No. 174, p. 226.]

No. 168

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 14th December, 1803.

Sir,—On the 28th ult. a ship, apparently a cruiser, was discovered standing for Corunna under

Spanish colours, which I directed the Ardent to chase, and have the satisfaction to inform you of the destruction of the French frigate la Bayonnaise of thirty-two guns and two hundred men, as reported by the inclosed letter from Captain Winthrop.

On the 11th instant the French ship *les Amis*, from Martinique, laden with coffee and sugar, was captured by the *Malta*. She had several officers on board, passengers, and was also charged with dispatches, which were destroyed. On the 12th I was joined by the *Rambler*, charged with your dispatches and orders, and as I have no other means of conveying the report of the foregoing circumstances to you, I have thought it proper to give her charge of the prize until she joins your flag.

Since writing the above the inclosed information from our Deputy-Consul at Ferrol came off last night from Captain Wallis, who was at anchor in Ares Bay, and from his mast-head can see the ships in Ferrol with topgallant sails bent.

The eager conduct of Don Francisco Fernandez to give us intelligence deserves your notice, and, when contrasted with the languid and feeble efforts of Mr. Morrogh at Corunna, entitles him to hope being mentioned to our Government.

I have the honour to inclose copies of a correspondence with the Governor of Ferrol relative to the purchase of live cattle for the squadron, which are now sent out to us, and which I trust you will approve.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE A

CAPTAIN WINTHROP TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Ardent, off Cape Finisterre, 29th November, 1803.

Sir,—The ship chased from the squadron yesterday by his Majesty's ship under my command I closed with off Cape Finisterre, so near as to be able to give her a few shot, and should have been alongside of her in a few minutes had not the wind headed me off shore, which enabled her to double the Cape and get into Finisterre Bay, where she ran on shore, from apprehension of our sending to take possession of her, and at midnight blew up.

She proved to be the Bayonnaise, French national frigate, of thirty-two guns and two hundred men, from Havana, bound to Ferrol.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

R. WINTHROP.

INCLOSURE B

VICE-CONSUL FERNANDEZ TO CAPTAIN WALLIS

12th December, 1803.

Honourable Sir,—This day received advice and intelligence that the French ships now in port are ordered immediately to Corunna without delay. If calm, they are to be towed out. The Admiral's ship with himself is to remain here, and his men are divided among the other ships, which without doubt you will take particular notice of for your own safety, and inform Sir Edward.

In meantime, I remain, &c.,

FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ.

¹ The Bayonnaise, Captain Leblond-Plassan, is said to have been armed *en flûte* with six guns. All her company escaped ashore before she blew up. (Troude, *Batailles Navales*, iii. 299.)

*INCLOSURE C**GOVERNOR CONTADOR TO SIR EDWARD
PELLEW*

Ferrol, 3rd December, 1803.

I have received from the Vice-Consul, Don Francisco Fernandez, the letter you have sent me, in which you request me to give the necessary assistance in purchasing twenty or thirty bullocks for the use of the squadron under your command. And I have authorised the Vice-Consul to procure them for you, and in which I shall give him every assistance he may require.

You may depend that I ever shall, with the same goodwill and readiness, facilitate to you all the refreshments you may be in want of, and oblige you in whatever else may be in my power.

May God grant you a long and happy life.

DIEGO CONTADOR.

*INCLOSURE D**CAPTAIN WINTHROP TO THE COMMANDANT
AT FINISTERRE*

His Britannic Majesty's ship Ardent,
29th November, 1803.

Sir,—Nothing could exceed my astonishment at being fired on last night after having quietly anchored on your coast. I can only account for so flagrant a breach of neutrality, and so insolent an indignity offered to a British line-of-battle ship, by supposing the crew of the French ship, after foolishly burning their vessel, had forcibly taken possession of your battery, and that it was Frenchmen and not Spaniards who fired at us. You must have witnessed

that from the time the French frigate drew near your shore I ceased all hostilities, and peaceably anchored for safety during the night, thereby strictly respecting the neutrality, and, though a Frenchman, she was safe. Their folly in burning their ship under these circumstances I cannot account for.

I demand of you, Sir, the reason of this indignity being offered to his Britannic Majesty's flag, that my Court may seek proper satisfaction; and I assure you that if the flag of truce dispatched with this letter is not duly respected I shall consider it as an actual hostility on your part, and shall act accordingly. I expect an immediate answer, and have the honour to be, &c.,

R. WINTHROP.

[The Admiralty minute upon this occurrence shows that, though their Lordships approved Captain Winthrop's representation, they considered that it should have been couched in terms of less asperity. Its harshness was ineffective, for Commandant José Enorgade, writing from the fort of San Carlos, near Finisterre, declared that he could not read it, and had no one to translate it into Castilian. A copy of it was sent by the Admiralty to the Secretary of State. See No. 180, p. 233.]

No. 169

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Prince of Wales, Berehaven, 15th December, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I arrived here this day in his Majesty's ship Prince of Wales, in

pursuance of orders from the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis, to take upon me the command of the ships named in the margin,¹ who have been cruising off Cape Clear ; also any others that may hereafter be sent to me to be employed upon that part of the coast of Ireland, to prevent the enemy from making a descent upon Ireland, &c. I am also directed to relieve the ships of the squadron now cruising off Ferrol from time to time from the ships under my direction here, and to replenish their provisions and stores, &c., at Berehaven.

Their Lordships may depend that every exertion in my power shall be used to put my orders into full force, and I shall hope with success.

When I am not in at Berehaven for the purpose of refitting the ships of the squadron, &c., my rendezvous will be from five to twenty leagues S.W. by chart from Cape Clear.

I shall, agreeably to my orders, send his Majesty's ship *Ganges*, as soon as I have completed her provisions, &c., to relieve the *Spartiate*, now off Ferrol, with orders for her to repair to Berehaven, and in her way to look out for me (for a day or two) upon my rendezvous, in case I might be at sea.

I shall dispose of the stores sent to Berehaven on board the ships of the squadron, agreeably to their Lordships' directions, and arrange the watering places as fast as possible. I beg leave to inform their Lordships that no provisions have as yet arrived here for the ships, and I have been obliged to furnish the *Ganges* from this ship.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

¹ Northumberland, Magnificent, *Ganges*, *Majestic*, *Thunderer*.

No. 170

COLLINGWOOD TO MR. J. E. BLACKETT.¹

Venerable, Cawsand Bay, 16th December, 1803.

. . . . I came in from sea with orders from the Admiralty to refresh my ship's company, and, poor creatures, they have been almost worked to death ever since. We began by discovering slight defects in the ship; and the farther we went in the examination the more important they appeared, until at last she was discovered to be so completely rotten as to be unfit for sea. We have been sailing for the last six months with only a sheet of copper between us and eternity. I have written to Lord St. Vincent to ask him for a sounder ship; but it deranges me exceedingly to be thus for ever changing.²

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 171

MR. FRERE TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Madrid, 17th December, 1803.

Sir,—The present situation of affairs at this Court renders it my duty to recommend to you to take such measures as you might judge necessary under the prospect of an approaching rupture between the two countries. Should affairs take such a turn as to justify me in authorising you to commence hostilities, I shall not fail to communicate

¹ Newnham Collingwood's *Life of Collingwood*, 3rd edit., p. 95.

² The Venerable, 74, came into Cawsand Bay on December 3. She was repaired and refitted, but, in November 1804, when lying with the fleet in Torbay, she went ashore in a gale of wind, and became a total wreck. Some of her people were lost. She had been Duncan's flag-ship at Camperdown.

to you the earliest intelligence of such an event. In the meantime I would recommend it to you to continue to observe the strictest and most scrupulous neutrality, the return of which on the part of the Spanish Governor, and commandants, you will of course insist upon, and I shall not fail to demand.

I am, &c.,

J. H. FRERE.¹

No. 172

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Prince of Wales, in Berehaven, 22nd December, 1803.

Sir,—I am very sorry to have occasion to report for their Lordships' information that there are upwards of fifty of the crew of his Majesty's ship Northumberland who are in a most alarming state from ulcers, and the infection is spreading rapidly through the crew. To put a stop to this in the shortest time, and to purify and cleanse the ship, so as to prevent her from becoming tainted, I have been under the absolute necessity of hiring an out-house to put the men into for a short time, until I can build a turf-house to place them in on a small

¹ John Hookham Frere, diplomatist and author, and the lifelong friend of Canning. He succeeded Canning as Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office in 1799, and in October 1800 was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Lisbon, being transferred to Madrid, where he remained nearly two years, at a very important time. He was frequently in communication with Nelson, and his conduct of affairs was approved by the Ministry, though he was recalled in August 1804, 'in consequence of circumstances having occurred which made it impossible for him any longer to communicate personally with the Prince of the Peace.' (*Pitt's Speeches*, 1806, iv. 383.)

island in this bay, where I hope very soon to get the men restored by the help of milk, vegetables, and the smell of earth. Every exertion shall be used on my part on this and every other occasion to forward the good of his Majesty's service.¹

I have this day sent out his Majesty's ship *Majestic* to cruise upon my rendezvous, to look out for victuallers expected to arrive, as well as any other ships, likewise to give me timely notice if the enemy should be on the coast. I purpose keeping one of the ships constantly employed on this service, whilst I am obliged to remain in port.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 173

CAPTAIN MARTIN TO CORNWALLIS

L'Impétueux, Cawsand Bay, 25th December, 1803.

Sir,—I beg to acquaint you that his Majesty's ship *l'Impétueux* suffered much in the severe gale of this morning. The mizen mast received a violent wrench, and is supposed to be sprung. The mainsail, main topsail, the mizen and fore storm staysails were blown to pieces; one of the starboard main chain plates drawn; and the ship laboured so excessively in the trough of the sea, and shipped so much more water than the pumps would carry off, that it became absolutely necessary for her safety to bear away for this port, where I arrived late in the evening.

I have the honour to inclose the ship's defects,

¹ The Northumberland was ordered to Plymouth, and Sir John Colpoys was instructed to send the surgeon of the flag-ship there, and the principal physicians and surgeons of the Royal Hospital were to investigate the case.

and a copy of the log since parting with Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

T. B. MARTIN.¹

INCLOSURE

Log of the Impétueux.

[December 25th] P.M. Strong breezes with a heavy swell. At 12.30 wore ship, and set the fore-sail; at three set the mainsail. Three strange sail to windward. At four fresh breezes and hazy. Dull weather. At five Admiral E. by N. $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Hauled up the mainsail and lee fore clue garnet. More moderate weather. Admiral E. by N. $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Moderate and cloudy with a heavy sea. At seven set the foresail. At eight set the mainsail. Dull weather. At 8.40 wore ship; set the fore and mizen topsails. At half-past ten up mainsail. At twelve strong gales, with rain.

A.M. Strong gales and squally weather; at two furled the fore and mizen topsails. Quarter before four lost sight of the brig; ten minutes before four

¹ The distinguished officer, afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Byam Martin, whose 'Letters and Papers,' edited by Admiral Sir R. Vesey Hamilton, are being published by the Navy Records Society. He was a remarkable example of the bygone methods of entering the service. When yet little more than an infant, he was borne upon the books of the Canada (Captain Cornwallis), the Foudroyant (Captain Sir John Jervis), and the Orpheus (Captain George Campbell), and his personal service did not begin until his thirteenth year, when (1785) he entered the Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth, to go afloat in the following year as 'captain's servant' in the Pegasus, with Prince William Henry. He was in command of the Impétueux from 1803 to 1805, and saw a good deal of service during the blockade.

Admiral N. two miles. At four strong gales, with heavy squalls.

At half-past six strong gales, with heavy squalls ; carried away the starboard main brace and larboard main topsail sheet ; sail blew to pieces ; set a storm mizen and forestay sail ; lost sight of the Admiral.

At half-past seven the storm mizen and fore stay-sail blew to pieces, and mainsail blew from the yard. At eight obliged to scuttle the lower deck ; ship labouring very much, and gained six inches on the pumps. At quarter-past eight the carpenter reported the mizen mast was sprung, in consequence of the vang of the gaff giving way. At half-past eight was struck with a sea on the larboard quarter, stove in eleven of the main-deck ports, half filled the main-deck, and carried away the bulkheads of the ward-room.

At eleven hard gales with violent squalls. Carried away the chain-plate of the foremost main shroud. Bore up under a reefed foresail. Saw a line-of-battle ship lying to, with her head to the southward, and her sails split and blowing from the yards.

T. B. MARTIN.

No. 174

SIR THOMAS GRAVES TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Foudroyant, Cawsand Bay, 26th December, 1803.

Sir,—I beg leave to acquaint you, for their Lordships' information, that having suffered so much in rigging and sails during the short time we have been at sea, and particularly during the gale of wind of yesterday, and finding it impossible to get up our rigging under the land with the same safety and expedition as at this place, and the wind being in

the S.W., which likewise made it impossible to regain my station off Brest in our present situation, I judged it best for his Majesty's service to anchor here till the masts are secured; after which I shall immediately put in execution the orders I have received from the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose for their Lordships' information, as well as my journal, by which it will appear that the whole of the vessels that were put under my orders have parted company in the different gales of wind, and that on yesterday morning I was left without a single vessel in company. This morning I passed close to the Ville de Paris. I made known my situation by signals Nos. 355 and 168 with the interrogatory pennant, which were answered by the affirmative No. 514. I beg leave to assure their Lordships that a single moment shall not be lost in putting to sea, and that nothing but the safety of his Majesty's ship, and the good of the service, even after having been found so far up Channel, should have induced me to anchor here, where I hope only to remain a few hours.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOS. GRAVES.

No. 175

COLLINGWOOD TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Colossus, Cawsand Bay, 28th December, 1803.

Sir,—Since I received their Lordships' orders to proceed to sea, the violence of the wind has made it impossible to move. The Neptune and this ship are all that are ready for sea, the weather having been such that it was not possible to get craft out with provisions and water to this bay; the Minotaur has yet very little on board, although nothing can

exceed the assiduity of Captain Mansfield to get her completed.

The moment there is a possibility of getting to the station off Ushant, their Lordships may trust I will not lose it; the wind is now W. by S., with every appearance of blowing hard. The Pickle, schooner, which sailed this morning with dispatches, is coming in.

I beg to observe that there are now ten sail of the line at this anchorage, which crowds it very much.

The bullocks which are on board this ship and the Neptune have suffered much in the late gale of wind. I have, therefore, ordered them to be killed and issued, except six in the Neptune and four in the Colossus, which are the least injured. The mizen mast of the Impétueux must be fished, which they are now preparing. The masts of the Royal Sovereign are not yet examined by the officers of the dockyard.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

No. 176

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, at Sea, 28th December, 1803.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the two-decked ships which have gone into Cawsand Bay of late have, from bad weather and other circumstances, been much longer absent than before, or perhaps than their captains would wish. But it has reduced the force under my orders watching the port of Brest very considerably.

I have only the *San Josef* and *Dreadnought* with me at present, but I expect to find the *Royal Sovereign* and *Plantagenet* upon the rendezvous.

The *Foudroyant* passed me on Monday, and made a signal that there was occasion for her to go into port to set up rigging. There are now only the *Impétueux* and *Culloden* of the inshore squadron.

I was obliged to direct the *Plantagenet* on the 22nd to land some reports I had received from Sir Edward Pellew, and I have not seen her since. I had reserved the *Doris* (having a jury fore yard) for such a purpose, but she had separated from me before, and I suppose is gone into port.

There are only six two-decked ships in all at present, reckoning one of them to go to Ferrol.¹ The last time we had the wind to the eastward for two or three days, the 4th, 5th, and 6th instant, more flags were reported in the road of Brest than had been seen before—a vice- and two rear-admirals, and one was reported at the main, behind the North Point. The masts appeared large, but the hull was not opened. All seemed to be of opinion that there was one, or two, of three decks, but Captain Baker, who had been stationed there some time, was of opinion all the flags were on board three-decked ships. The *Plantagenet*, at the time the wind was easterly, worked up by signal, and returned. Captain De Courcy thought there was at least one of three decks, but we were not able to gain ground with the three-decked ships.

There certainly were none of three decks in the Road when Captain Domett took the last account, which was on the 9th of October, and if they have

¹ This was an error. Cornwallis explained on the next day that there were seven ships of two decks, besides those in which Rear-Admirals Collingwood and Graves were embarked.

three-decked ships there now, they must have changed them, as their numbers do not appear by reports to be considerably increased. The wind has blown hard from the south and west for these last three weeks. This morning it has suddenly changed to the north and east. I send the Nimrod with demands for sails, as many of them have been destroyed in the late gales, and also to request Admiral Sir John Colpoys to send every ship of the squadron immediately off Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 177

SIR ROBERT CALDER TO SIR E. NEPEAN

Prince of Wales, in Berehaven, 29th December, 1803.

At 2 P.M.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your secret letter, dated the 23rd, conveyed through Admiral Lord Gardner, and sent by express to me by his Lordship. I beg you will assure their Lordships that I shall pay every attention to their informations therein contained, and do everything in my power to accomplish their wishes.

As the victuallers are not arrived, I have requested Admiral Lord Gardner to forward to me a temporary supply of provisions, as the ships have not at this time two months' provisions on board, and we may be obliged to complete the Spartiate out of the ships now here, and possibly before the victuallers shall arrive.

We have had most severe weather for the whole time I have been off this coast, and in at Berehaven. The Majestic and Camden cutter have been driven back into port twice within this week. On Tuesday

last we had a most violent hurricane for four hours, during which time some of the ships drove, and the Prince of Wales parted her two bowers, one being cut by an anchor left here by some ship. We have just recovered both the anchors, and the squadron is all to rights.

I shall be ready to proceed to sea with the squadron at a moment's notice, when the wind will permit. It was very fortunate we were all in here during the tremendous weather we have had of late.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 178

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, Torbay, 31st December, 1803.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the wind having changed unfortunately a few points against us on each tack, I found we were yesterday morning off the Start, with every appearance that the strong south-west wind we had so long experienced would continue. I therefore thought it advisable, lest we should be driven to the eastward, to anchor here, which I did in the evening, with the San Josef and Dreadnought in company.

Their Lordships may be assured that not a moment's time shall be lost, when the weather is at all favourable for me to get upon the station. I found the *Atalante* sloop and *Pickle* schooner here, the former in a state which renders it necessary that she should proceed to Plymouth on account of her defects, which I have sent Mr. Clark, the carpenter of this ship, to examine.

I am employing shore boats to complete the water of this ship.

Sir Charles Cotton, before I came in, reported a number of men in flux on board the *San Josef*, and Mr. Kein, having been on board to examine, thinks it necessary to send thirty on shore, the disease having increased very much of late.

I had the honour of receiving yesterday your letters of the 23rd and 26th, the first in duplicate, containing intelligence to which I shall pay every attention in my power. I sent yesterday orders to Plymouth for the two-deck ships of the squadron to join Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves to form the inshore squadron, and any stores to be sent in the three-decked ships to join me here, or off Brest, as the wind might be at the time of sailing.

The demands for stores were sent to Plymouth as soon as we anchored.

The *Ville de Paris* is a little strained in one place, and the ship is now heeled to caulk it; but nothing shall prevent our putting to sea the moment the opportunity offers.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 179

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, Torbay, 1st January, 1804.
Getting under way, 8 A.M.

Sir,—I request that you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the weather having moderated this morning, I am proceeding off Brest, where I expect to find the ships from Plymouth. Nothing arrived from thence

during yesterday. I have ordered the *Atalante* to go there immediately.

Thirty men have been landed at the hospital from the *San Josef*.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 180

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN WINTHROP (ARDENT)

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 1st January, 1804.

Sir,—Having transmitted to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty a copy of the correspondence which I received from Captain Sir Edward Pellew, which had passed between you and the Commander of the Spanish forces at Finisterre, their Lordships have, by letter from Sir Evan Nepean, dated the 26th ult., acquainted me that they have sent a copy of the correspondence to his Majesty's Secretary of State; and that, although a representation of the circumstances stated in your letter was proper, yet it should have been made in terms of less asperity.

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 181

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 2nd January, 1804.

Sir,—The Admiralty have been very desirous of communicating to me intelligence lately received, but dated the latter end of November—

That a number of large merchant ships have been taken up at Bordeaux, a prodigious number of

bullocks killed, and other stores collected. From the size of the ships, and quantity of stores and provisions prepared, it is conjectured that some distant expedition is intended—perhaps Egypt.

At Rochefort, 20,000 men, under General Augereau, to be embarked; a further force of not less than 18,000 to be immediately embarked on board the ships of war and transports at Brest—supposed against Ireland.

La Grange to have a command in the Irish expedition, and to embark in the fleet, which consisted at that time of fifteen ships of the line, and 150 transports ready for sea, only waiting for orders.

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have directed me to warn you of the present activity of the enemy in the Bay, and that you should be particularly watchful of the enemy at Ferrol.

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 182

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 3rd January, 1804.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I arrived off Ushant yesterday morning, where I found the *Plantagenet*, whom I immediately ordered by signal to go inshore off of Brest, to reconnoitre the enemy's force in the roads. In the evening I was joined by the *Colossus*, Rear-Admiral Collingwood, and the *Neptune*.

The *Plantagenet* returned to me this morning with a report of the enemy's force, received from Captain Prowse of the *Sirius*, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose, dispatched by the *Mary*

cutter, which is directed to land the same at Falmouth in order that their Lordships may receive the earliest information of the state of the enemy's ships at Brest.

The ships named in the margin are now with me.¹ The Sirius and Diamond are inshore, and the Joseph cutter.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

Eight ships of the line, amongst which *he was certain* there was not a single three-decker.

Four ships, supposed to be store-ships.²

One ship, supposed to be a hospital ship.

Three smaller vessels.

Total number sixteen.

The yards and topmasts of those ships were struck.

The above report was made to Captain De Courcy by Captain Prowse, of the Sirius, the 2nd of January, 1804.

A REPORT OF THE STATE OF THE ENEMY'S SHIPS IN BREST.

16 sail of pennants in all :—

8 sail of the line,

4 large ships, apparently more like armed *en flûtes* than regular line-of-battle ships,

2 smaller ditto,

1 hulk,

1 brig.

¹ San Josef, Colossus, Dreadnought, Neptune, Plantagenet.

² Captain Prowse was on board the *Ville de Paris* on January 9. He was confident that nothing had escaped. The ships called store-ships had lower-deck ports, and Cornwallis was

I could not make out a three-deck ship amongst them.

WM. PROWSE.

Tuesday, 3rd January, 1804.

[On January 4 Captain De Courcy in the *Plantagenet*, and Lord H. Paulet in the *Terrible*, were ordered to perform the duties of the inshore squadron until the arrival of Sir Thomas Graves with five sail of the line, when the former was to rejoin Cornwallis, and the latter to follow the orders of Graves. The *Plantagenet* was compelled, by damage in the gales, to bear away to the anchorage in Cawsand Bay on January 19. See Captain De Courcy's letter, January 22, p. 255. Other orders issued by Cornwallis early in January were for the *Indefatigable* to continue cruising off Rochefort, and for the *Endymion* to cruise to the westward and endeavour to intercept the French privateers, *Bellone*, *Vaillant*, and *Brave*, said to be cruising from 47° to 48° N. lat., and 11° to 16° W. long., and then to stretch off Cape Finisterre to prevent prizes taken by the enemy from being sent into Spanish ports.

[A circumstance occurred at this time at Brest that greatly distressed Caffarelli. On January 6 fire broke out in two places in the *Patriote*, 74, which lay near the rope store, and he wrote to Decrès that he had too much reason to think this was the work of emissaries of the English, who were constantly occupied with the idea of burning the port. That such a purpose was seriously meditated does not appear, though it will be shown later on that the burning of the French fleet was actually contemplated. On January 12 the First

inclined to think the frigates had been put out of sight, and that the French were at pains to hide their force.

Consul dispatched a note to Decrès : ' Présenter un projet d'arrêté pour faire traduire à une commission maritime l'agent des Anglais qui a été saisi à Brest. Ordonner de lui mettre les fers aux mains et aux pieds, et de le laisser plusieurs jours sans nourriture, jusqu'à ce qu'il ait fait connaître ses complices ' ¹ (Levot, ' Hist. de la Ville et du Port de Brest sous le Consulat et l'Empire,' p. 276). On February 23, ' le chouan Marchand ' was condemned to death and executed for the firing of the Patriote ; but a young man of Nantes afterwards committed suicide, leaving a declaration that he was the author of the fire, and that he only regretted not having killed the prefect.]

No. 183

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, Entrance Betanzos Bay, 7th January, 1804.²

Sir,—The Nimble joined me on the 3rd instant, the Ganges on the same day from Ireland, to relieve the Spartiate, who parted from the squadron, and has not been seen since the 20th of last month. The ships have suffered considerably for the last twelve days in one continued gale, and the supplies by the Ganges (a list of which I inclose) were very much wanted. We have none of us a second topsail fit to bend, and the Ganges lost hers on her passage, with a mainsail ; indeed, it has been impossible for canvas to stand, but the sea was so great we were reduced to the necessity of setting sail or losing masts. The people have been worn out, and our sick list upon an average above sixty.

I have procured a small supply of fresh beef, which is in itself cheap, but the Spanish Government

¹ See note, p. 291.

² Forwarded by the Naiad, January 11.

having demanded the duties nearly doubled its price. The French squadron pay no duty, and I shall therefore write Mr. Frere at Madrid upon it. This supply was absolutely necessary, and of infinite service to the people, so completely out of clothing.

We spoke the *Diana* on the 3rd, with seventeen sail in company; the rest of her convoy had parted; and among the absentees was a navy store-ship. I have heard of no privateers, and as the wind was then fair, and continues so, I hope she may have gone safe.

The French squadron are evidently determined on a push the first favourable moment. I hope we shall prevent their escape to Corunna, and if the new commodore puts his threats in execution of forcing his way, our long watching may be ultimately rewarded. Certain it is the Spaniards are anxious to get them away, and I still think a port in France is their object. I have inclosed the state of the ships, with all the necessary documents for your information, together with a list and distribution of the stores. I send no regular demands, as I understand from Sir Robert Calder each ship with him has proportion out of the store ship so as to empty her entirely. I should therefore hope the next ship will bring some topsails. The *Naiad* will take all the prisoners made by the *Malta*, with the surgeon of the *Terrible*, to join his ship. I have to report the increasing dampness of the magazine, the weekly destruction of cartridges being from eighty to one hundred.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE A

State of the enemy's force in the ports of Ferrol and Corunna, as reconnoitred by the Tonnant.

In Ferrol.

French { Three line-of-battle } ready for sea.
 { One brig-corvette }
 Argonaute stripped in the arsenal for
 docking.

Dutch.—Oldenbarneveldt, condemned as before
 stated.

In Corunna.

French { One line } ready for sea
 { Two frigates }

In Ferrol.

Spanish { Eight of the line, two nearly ready.
 { Eight gunboats } ready.
 { Eight mortar-boats }

Tonnant, entrance of Betanzos Bay, 7th January.
 ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE B

Information.

Rear-Admiral Bedout has struck his flag by order, and left Ferrol. The command of the squadron is assumed by the Adjutant-General of the fleet sent from Brest expressly.

For some days past the enemy's ships in Ferrol intended to have run down to Corunna, provided the breeze from the eastward had been very strong; they continue at single anchor with every person on board.

The crew of the *Argonaute* (except thirty hands) are distributed to the other ships, and the crew of the *Bayonnaise* are received by the *Duguay-Trouin*, at *Corunna*. A few days since the Spaniards have been much employed mounting cannon in all their forts, and the garrison at *Ferrol* is augmented to 7,000 troops. They have made no alteration with respect to their ships, except the two intended for the West Indies, which are getting forward.

7th January, 1804.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 184

CAPTAIN DURHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Defiance, at anchor, Le Pertuis d'Antioche,
7th January, 1804.

Sir,—The *Goliath* having parted company on the 10th ult., but being again in sight, enables me to send *l'Aigle* with the state of the enemy's force at *Ile d'Aix*, with a copy of such intelligence as I have been able to receive.

On the 20th ult. I spoke a vessel under Swedish colours, from the master of which I obtained the following information—that he had been on board the three-decker at *Ile d'Aix* the day before yesterday, which was all ready for sea, and was informed by a countryman of his on board that she has a complement of 1,500 or 1,600 men, had received orders about a week ago to sail for *Brest*, and had been under way, but, being narrowly watched by the squadron, had come to an anchor again; he further stated that he had been three weeks in *Rochefort*, during which time no vessels had sailed from that port.

I have just received the following information from Captain Geo. Wolfe, of the *Aigle* :—

'State of the enemy at anchor off the Ile d'Aix, Saturday, the 7th of January, 1804. Distance from his Majesty's ship *Aigle* at noon about three miles.

' 1 3-decker	}	To appearance quite ready for sea.
1 2-decker		
2 frigates		
1 ship - cor- vette	}	To appearance quite ready for sea.

'*Aigle*, 7th January, 1804, Geo. Wolfe, captain.'

I am, &c.,

P. C. DURHAM.

No. 185

CAPTAIN DURHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Defiance, Le Pertuis d'Antioche, 8th January, 1804.

Sir,—Inclosed I have the honour to transmit you a letter received from Captain Brisbane of his Majesty's ship the *Goliath*, which fully accounts for his being so long absent.

I have supplied the *Goliath* with a bower cable and anchor.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

P. C. DURHAM.

INCLOSURE

CAPTAIN BRISBANE TO CAPTAIN DURHAM

Goliath, off Chassiron, 7th January, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Commander-in-Chief, [with] the proceedings of his Majesty's ship *Goliath*, since my

I.

R

parting company on the night of the 10th ult., at 2 A.M. Having lost sight of your light I proceeded inshore, and at daylight was close off Baleines ; and, having discovered a convoy consisting of two hundred sail, steering to the northward, I felt it my duty to proceed with the Goliath up the Pertuis Breton, for the purpose of intercepting and destroying as many as possible ; and I am much gratified to say that several were driven on shore, and the whole of the convoy obliged to put back, and take shelter under the batteries of St. Martin. At seven that evening I anchored the Goliath off St. Martin, in 10 fathoms of water, and ordered the boats to proceed inshore for the purpose of taking them from under the batteries, or destroying them ; a service I am convinced would have been gallantly executed, had not the wind suddenly shifted, and blown a strong gale from an opposite quarter, which prevented the boats from rowing ahead. I continued at anchor until the convoy had completely dispersed, some returning to Rochefort, others getting to various creeks connected with the Ile de Ré and the main, in shallow water, which prevented the Goliath from getting near them. On the evening of the 12th, fully satisfied the convoy was dispersed, without the possibility of proceeding on their voyage, I directed the Goliath to be weighed, and stood to sea for the purpose of joining you off Chassiron. At six that evening we were taken aback with the wind from the westward, close inshore, shortly after increasing to a gale with a heavy swell, which placed the Goliath rather in a dangerous situation, the night being extremely dark, and the Baleines light being extinguished for the purpose, I conclude, of deceiving us. I continued carrying a very heavy press of sail to work off a lee shore, but to no purpose. From the very heavy swell the

ship lost ground on both tacks, and the only alternative left was trying our anchors. At half-past two, finding I was shoaling the water, I decided to bring the ship up, in which I succeeded, the sea then breaking over our forecastle, riding by two anchors, and two cables, on each an end. At daylight, having discovered my situation, and the impossibility of the ship continuing long at her anchors, in a gale blowing directly on shore, with the sea breaking over her, and nearly within gun-shot of the enemy's batteries, I ordered the cables to be cut, and proceeded with the ship to the anchorage I had before left. In the act of casting, the tiller was broken by a heavy sea striking under the quarter. With some difficulty I recovered my anchorage, and when the wind moderated I again proceeded to sea, keeping off Chassiron until the night of the 24th, when a strong gale rose from the westward, and being inshore, I directed the course to be shaped for Belle Isle, and anchored under the Isle of Hoedic, where we had constant strong gales from the south-west to the north-west, until the morning of the 2nd inst., when I again weighed, and made sail for my rendezvous.

I beg to offer you my thanks for your assistance with an anchor and cable, and to assure you the *Goliath* is now ready for any service. She has been struck with the splinter of a shell under the larboard quarter, but not injured.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

C. BRISBANE.¹

¹ In communicating Captain Brisbane's letter, with that of Captain Durham, to the Admiralty, on January 14, Cornwallis, stated that Captain Durham had apprised him of the death of Lieutenant Kent of the *Goliath*, and Lieutenant Langston of the *Marines*, serving in that ship, in consequence of wounds received in cutting out a French brig, as reported by Captain Brisbane on December 9.

No. 186

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 9th January, 1804.¹

Sir,—I herewith inclose for their Lordships' information a copy of a letter addressed to me by Captain Prowse of the *Sirius*, giving an account of the capture of three *chasse-marées* by the *Joseph* hired armed cutter.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

LIEUTENANT USSHER TO CAPTAIN PROWSE

Joseph, hired armed cutter, off Brest, 3rd January, 1804.

Sir,—I beg leave to acquaint you that last night, being off Pointe de la Chèvre, I perceived three *chasse-marées* coming through the Passage du Raz, which, after a short chase, I succeeded in capturing. Their names are unknown, the crews having abandoned them, taking with them the papers. Their respective cargoes consist of ship-timber, brandy, wine, cider, and salt,

I am, &c.,

THOS. USSHER.²

¹ This dispatch, with other communications, dated on and after January 3, was sent by the *San Josef* on January 10. She proceeded, with company reduced by disease, to replenish and refresh at Cawsand Bay. On January 11, Cornwallis wrote that the only ships with him were the *Colossus* and *Dreadnought*, the *Neptune* having unaccountably parted company on the 8th. The inshore ships were the *Plantagenet*, *Minotaur*, and *Terrible*, the *Sirius* and *Diamond* frigates, and the *Mary* cutter.

² The distinguished officer, afterwards Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Ussher (1779–1848). O'Byrne gives a long account of his service, which was marked on several occasions by the most

No. 187

REPORT BY CAPTAIN PROWSE

[N] 18. 17. 16. 15. 14. 13. 12. 11. 10.
 (flag) (flag)

9. 8. 7. 6. 5. 4. 3. 2. 1. S.¹
 (flag)

- 1 Two-deck ship, black sides, yards and topmasts struck.
- 2 Two-deck ship, black sides, sails bent.
- 3 Three decks, yellow sides, all a-taunt.
- 4 } Two hulks, apparently jury masts.
- 5 }

intrepid bravery. He was appointed to the Joseph cutter in September 1803, as a lieutenant, and to the Colpoys brig in April 1804. He took a most active part in ascertaining the positions of the French ships in Brest, with the view of destroying them. This is a matter which will be fully elucidated in the next volume. The following incident, from O'Byrne, is referred by him to the close of 1804. Cornwallis being in doubt as to whether the French had left port or not, 'Mr. Ussher, of his own accord, stood close inshore after dark, and hoisting out his gig (a 4-oared boat) actually entered the harbour, discovered and rowed along the whole French line, and thereby gained an exact knowledge of the enemy's force, consisting of 21 sail.' He was descried and pursued, but escaped to the Colpoys with his intelligence. See, however, Cornwallis's letter to Nepean, March 13th, 1804 (No. 225, p. 294), referring to a similar service rendered by Lieut. Ussher at an earlier period. On another occasion, says O'Byrne, Ussher landed with six men near Bertheaume Castle, surprised a signal-post, seized the private signals, locked up the guard in a room, and brought off the commanding officer. Sir Thomas Ussher's later service was both interesting and distinguished.

¹ The French ships lay in a line north and south, the position being less than two miles east of the Pointe de Portzic and the Pointe des Espagnols, and the head of the line near to the town and arsenal of Brest. In the next volume I hope to reproduce plans made at the time showing the exact position.

- 6 Two-deck ship, yellow sides.
- 7 } Two frigates, yellow sides, topmasts struck.
- 8 }
- 9 } Two-deck ships, yellow sides.
- 10 }
- 11 } Two-deck ships, dark sides.
- 12 }
- 13 Three-deck ship, yellow sides.
- 14 Corvette.
- 15 Two-deck ship, yellow sides.
- 16 Two-deck ship, black sides.
- 17 Three-deck ship, double [yellow ?] sides ;
query of two or three decks.
- 18 Two-deck ship, yellow sides.

A frigate under sail coming from the inner to the outer road, making the signal for her powder, as reported by the pilot ; seven small vessels besides.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 188

OBSERVATIONS BY CAPTAIN MOORE

11th January, 1804.

In Lorient, with topgallant yards across, and all sails bent, apparently all ready for sea :

Two ships of the line, one quite new, and lately launched, both two decks ;

One frigate, called *L'Infatigable*, mounting forty-eight guns, 24-pounders, on the main deck, quite new, and lately launched at Lorient ;

A new frigate of thirty-six guns, 12-pounders, on the main deck, launched at Lorient only a few days since. We saw her on the 10th instant, with lower masts in, topmasts pointed, through apparently fitting out.

We have been informed that these ships are not

half manned, but to all appearance all, except the small frigate, are quite ready for sea.

By the same information we learn that a great many flat boats are getting ready at Lorient, Hennelon, Vannes, and at Rochelle. They have four feet height under the deck, mount two guns in the bow, and one abaft, all 24-pounders, and row thirty-six oars.

L'Isle Dieu is fortified. There is a regular work on the height above the town, and, as the same information gave us to understand, there is a garrison of 700 men.

GRAHAM MOORE

No. 189

*SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CONSUL-GENERAL
HUNTER*

Tonnant, Betanzos Bay, 13th January, 1804.

Sir,—I had the honour to receive a letter from Mr. Frere, dated the 17th ultimo, and have marked well the contents, and transmitted it to the Commander-in-Chief. This day I had the honour of a reply from you to the letter alluded to by Mr. Frere, and I am very glad to observe by it that you intend to pay due attention to the recommendations of Mr. Fernandez, who continues day by day to increase his claims to my approbation, and that of our Government.

I have at present taken shelter with my squadron in Betanzos Bay. Indeed these continued gales have pressed upon me that measure, and I have been anchored here with the squadron for several days, during which your deputy at Corunna has had sufficient time by letter, or in person, to offer those attentions to the King's service the duties of

his station point out. I am sorry to say he has disappointed my expectations ; and, although there are several British seamen lurking about Corunna, he has never found the opportunity of sending any of them to us, when, on the contrary, Mr. Fernandez has sent off many.

His Excellency the Governor of Ferrol has shown every disposition to pay attention to my requests of refreshments, but he suffers us to be charged by the Custom House a duty of 20 per cent. on all the fresh beef required for the squadron, although (if I am rightly informed) he dispenses with that duty being paid by the French squadron.

You, Sir, will, of course, make necessary application on that head, that orders may proceed from Madrid to place the ships and subjects of his Britannic Majesty on a footing with every other friendly nation.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

No. 190

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 19th January, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour to send, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a statement of the force daily off Ushant and Brest, from the 30th of November to the present date.

When I arrived off Ushant, the 2nd of this month, I found the Plantagenet there, and was joined by the Colossus and Neptune, which made six sail of the line in all. On the 4th I was joined by the Terrible, and on the 6th by the Minotaur, which are all the ships of the squadron that I

have seen or heard of being at sea since I left Torbay. On the 8th the Neptune parted company, and on the 10th I was obliged to send the San Josef to Cawsand Bay, for the reasons I have already given.

On going into Torbay, on the 30th of last month, I received dispatches, by which it appeared that an armament of fifteen sail of the line was at Brest, waiting for orders.

Several of our ships have gone in from accidents. They remain a long time in port, probably from not being able, on account of the bad weather at this season, to get their supplies, or defects made good. I therefore submit to their Lordships the propriety of an inshore squadron, under these circumstances.

At first, when there were only a few ships in Brest Road, I considered the two-decked ships well employed upon that service.¹ But I should doubt their Lordships approving of dividing the force at a time when all the ships attached to this part of the squadron, united, do not amount to more than the enemy are expected to sail with.

In consequence of the mention made in your letter, dated 26th of October last, written by command of their Lordships, I have inquired of the pilot how far Douarnenez Bay might answer for the whole squadron to watch the enemy, but I am informed the French may sail from Brest, with the wind a point or two to the westward of north, when the squadron in Douarnenez Bay would be obliged to work out, and could not weather the Saints.² Their Lordships are best informed as to the appearance of enterprise in the enemy.

¹ See note following the inclosure sent with this dispatch.

² In the nautical observations which accompany the chart of Rear-Admiral Knight, based upon a survey made in 1800 and pub-

I have only thought it my duty to make these observations known to them, that I may have the honour of receiving their commands.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

Ships off Ushant and Brest, December 1803.

Ville de Paris.

San Josef.

Royal Sovereign (separated in the night on the 21st).

Prince of Wales (detached the 7th).

Plantagenet.

Mars

Conqueror

Minotaur

Culloden (supposed to have gone in on the 27th

or 28th).

Joined the 4th: Foudroyant (went in on the 26th).

Rejoined the 7th: Dreadnought.

Rejoined the 9th: Impétueux (went in on the 26th).

Abstract, Daily Force.

1st to the 4th of December	.	.	Nine
4th to 6th	.	.	Ten
6th to 8th	.	.	Ten

lished in 1802, it is remarked of Douarnenez Bay that the winds that obliged the ships of the advanced squadron to quit their usual anchorage off St. Matthew's Point would enable them in two hours to reach the Bay, where they would lie undisturbed, and, by having a look-out ship near the Basse Vieille rock at the entrance, every movement from Camaret, Bertheaume, or Brest would be seen, and the ships would be able to work out, when those in Brest, with the same wind, could not.

8th to 14th	.	.	.	.	.	Ten
14th to 18th	.	.	.	.	.	Nine
19th to 21st	.	.	.	.	.	Eight
21st to 26th	.	.	.	.	.	Seven
26th to 28th	.	.	.	.	.	Five
28th to 31st	.	.	.	.	.	Four

January, 1804.

Ville de Paris.

San Josef, sent in on the 10th.

Dreadnought.

Plantagenet.

Rejoined the	{	Colossus.
2nd January		Neptune (parted company in the night on the 8th).
Joined the 4th of	{	Terrible.
January		
Rejoined the 6th :		Minotaur.

Abstract, Daily Force.

1st January, 1804	.	.	.	.	Four
2nd and 3rd	.	.	.	.	Six
4th and 5th	.	.	.	.	Seven
6th to 8th	.	.	.	.	Eight
9th .	.	.	.	.	Seven
10th to 19th	.	.	.	.	Six

W. CORNWALLIS.

[In relation to the subject of this letter, Cornwallis issued a memorandum to the captains on the following day, instructing them that the two-decked ships were to form the squadron inshore, under the direction of Sir Thomas Graves, or other senior officer for the time being, and to act according to the orders formerly given. Stringent orders were issued for the reinforcing of his squadron; but, owing to the terrific storms of January, Graves was

long unable to gain his station. On January 25 the Admiralty informed Cornwallis, in reference to his remarks upon the constitution of an inshore squadron and the rendezvous in Douarnenez Bay, that they had never wished to restrict him in any particular disposition of forces; and that he was to use his own judgment in the matter.]

No. 191

SIR EVAN NEPEAN TO CORNWALLIS

Admiralty Office, 20th January, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour of transmitting to you for your information a copy of a letter which has been received by Lord Hawkesbury from Mr. Frere, his Majesty's Minister at the Court of Madrid. Other accounts which have been received appear to confirm the march of General Augereau's army for Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

EVAN NEPEAN.

INCLOSURE

MR. FRERE TO LORD HAWKESBURY

Madrid, 27th December, 1803.

My Lord,—By the accounts received this morning from Bayonne, it appears that General Augereau left that place on the 23rd in the morning, with his staff and a strong escort, on their way to Brest. The army had for some days been in march for that destination.

Seven Irish passed through here while I was at the Escorial, in post, on their way to Paris, as it

was said, but certainly to France. They travelled with public passports.

The shipping at Bordeaux has been under embargo, and in requisition, and the conscripts in the neighbourhood seized for the service of the marine. All the reports agree in the expectation that the great attempt will be made almost immediately.

By a letter from Ferrol it appears that the French squadron there have received orders to push out, and, as it is said, to put into Corunna; and on the 19th a courier was at Cadiz from the latter port with orders for a French ship, corvette, and a brig of war which are lying there.

I am, &c.,

J. H. FRERE.

No. 192

CAPTAIN HOTHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Impérieux, Plymouth, 20th January, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that I arrived off the bar of Oporto, agreeably to your orders, and made the signal for the convoy on the 4th of last month, but was prevented from remaining or returning to the coast, and the convoy was prevented from coming out over the bar by the extreme badness of the weather (with the wind invariably from the westward and southward) till the 7th of the present month, and on the 9th I sailed with fifteen sail of vessels under my convoy; but a hard gale of wind and thick weather from the southwest coming on before they were well collected under sail, I found myself with but seven of them next morning, with whom, after lying to most part of the day, I proceeded, and dispatched them into

their several places of destination as we approached them; and on the 15th, having but two left with me, and one only bound to Portsmouth, I did not conceive that you intended I should go into Spithead with only one brig. Therefore I sent her in, without going there myself, and proceeded to join you off Ushant, which the southerly and south-west winds would not allow me to do before. The violent gale of last night reduced the ship to so much distress with respect to her sails, it having blown away the only serviceable maintopsail I had in the ship, and the foresail, before I had another repaired and ready to bend; and the ship being otherwise in an unfit state to remain at sea, I was obliged to bear up this morning for Plymouth Sound, which I hope you will approve of from the necessity of the case.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

HY. HOTHAM.

No. 193

CAPTAIN DURHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Defiance, at sea, 20th January, 1840.

Sir,—This morning, in a gale of wind from the westward, I observed a ship standing in for the coast of France, and, from the rake of her masts, &c., I thought she very much resembled the description of the Brutus. I therefore ordered the Goliath to examine her, but doubted very much the possibility of her boarding her, from the heavy sea; notwithstanding which that judicious officer Captain Brisbane succeeded in taking possession of her, and I am happy to say she proved to be the Brutus, with a number of suspicious passengers on board. I have ordered Captain Brisbane to take possession of her according to your orders, and send her into port,

but from the continuance of the gale I have but little or no communication with her.

Yesterday I fell in with the Weymouth, American ship from Boston, bound to Bordeaux, just come from the Ile de Ré, from the master of which I received the following information—viz. :

A day or two previous to his sailing a convoy of gun-brigs and boats,¹ and *chasse-marées* with their guns on board, had sailed to the eastward, and 150 gun-boats were ready to sail. The troops had not embarked, but believes they are at Rochefort. On the 18th inst. the ships of war remained in the same situation as when reconnoitred on the 12th.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
P. C. DURHAM.

No. 194

CAPTAIN DE COURCY TO CORNWALLIS

Plantagenet, Cawsand Bay, 22nd January, 1804.

Sir,—It is not without deep regret that I do myself the honour of addressing a letter to you from Cawsand Bay.

I had flattered myself that I should be able to preserve the station assigned to me by your orders of the 4th instant until the arrival of Sir Thomas Graves with five sail of the line should justify my repairing to your flag ; but the loss of a main topmast and main yard, with almost all the principal sails of the ship, reduced me on the 19th to the extremity of bearing away to this anchorage.

The loss of the spars alone should not have constituted this necessity. Unfortunately, I had but two of the principal sails remaining—a fore topsail and a mizen topsail. I had long been without a main topsail, and the courses were blown

¹ Each boat carrying between forty and fifty soldiers.

away in the gale, which occasioned the fall of the topmast. No sail whatever was set when the mast went by the board. In its fall it carried away the main yard. To save the main mast it became necessary to cut away the wreck; for as there were no storm staysails remaining, the ship rolled excessively.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

M. DE COURCY.

No. 195

CAPTAIN HOTHAM TO CORNWALLIS

Impérieux, Plymouth Sound, 25th January, 1804.

Sir,—In obedience to your orders I have informed the Secretary of the Admiralty that I was in lat. $44^{\circ} 22'$ North, and long. $6^{\circ} 52'$ West, when I fell in with the *Britannia* (whaler), and recaptured her in lat. $44^{\circ} 06'$ North, and long. $7^{\circ} 16'$ West, Cape Ortegal bearing south 36, west 25 miles. And I beg leave to inform you that the officers of the dockyard having represented that the defects of the ship I command cannot be made good in the Sound, Admiral Sir John Colpoys has ordered her this day into Barn Pool.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

H^y. HOTHAM.

I beg leave to refer you to my letter of the 20th, with its several inclosures, for an account of my proceedings and the cause of my being here.

No. 196

ADMIRALTY MINUTE

25th January, 1804.

Directions to be sent to Sir John Colpoys to give every assistance from the ships in the harbour to

get the ships out of Cawsand Bay to join Admiral Cornwallis, by employing their boats, if necessary, to carry off the stores they may want from the dock-yards, and to call upon the other department to give a preference to the ships of the line belonging to Admiral Cornwallis in their equipment, and to hurry them to sea as fast as possible.

Direct Sir Charles Cotton to hurry all the ships under Admiral Cornwallis's orders to join him off Ushant without a moment's loss of time, as they may be in readiness for sea, directing their commanders to sail separately to join him, making the best of their way without waiting for a flag officer, or paying attention to each other's movements, as it is of the utmost importance that the Admiral should be reinforced as speedily as possible.¹

No. 197

*CAPTAIN WILLIAM SELBY TO SIR JAMES
SAUMAREZ*

Cerberus, off Cape de la Hague, 26th January, 1804.

Sir,—In pursuance of your orders, I, yesterday, at 1 P.M., weighed in his Majesty's ship Cerberus, under my command, from Guernsey Roads, and having passed through the Little Russel, I shaped a

¹ In consequence of this minute Sir Charles Cotton, at Plymouth, was informed that Cornwallis was by no means satisfied with the vessels under his orders remaining in port, and Sir Thomas Graves and the captains of the Foudroyant, Impétueux, Neptune, and Conqueror were instructed that they would have to account to the Vice-Admiral for so doing. They were to rejoin without a moment's loss of time. On January 28 Graves left Cawsand Bay in the Foudroyant with the Prince, Conqueror, and Impétueux, but they were driven to seek shelter again, and the Foudroyant and Conqueror did not sail from Torbay until February 2.

course for Cape de la Hague, in order, if possible, to look into Cherbourg before dark. In our approach to the above Cape, we discovered a convoy of the enemy, consisting of four armed vessels, steering to the eastward. We had the good fortune to cut them off before they reached the Cape, which obliged them to anchor. The strength of the tide prevented our reaching them. I therefore hauled the wind to the southward, under a press of sail, until after dark, when we bore up for Cape de la Hague, and at midnight saw them coming round the Cape, but so close to the land that it was considered dangerous to take the ship near them. However, a heavy squall of wind driving them a little further from the shore, we succeeded in capturing the National gun-vessel *le Chameau*, and driving one on the rocks; the rest effected their escape, owing to the vicinity of the rocks, which at that time were not more than a cable's length from us.

The above gun-vessel is 300 tons burden, is quite new, carries four long 6-pounders and two swivels, commanded by Francis Gallière, enseigne de vaisseau, having on board at the time of capture fifty-eight men, twenty-one of whom are soldiers, fully accoutred. She is calculated to carry between two and three hundred troops, and appears to be a gun-vessel fit for his Majesty's service.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

WILLIAM SELBY.

No. 198

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, at sea, 27th January, 1804.

Sir,—I have this day by the Fox cutter received your letter, dated the 19th instant, written by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the

Admiralty, containing intelligence, with a copy of a letter from Mr. Duff, and a paper giving an account of naval preparations and occurrences in the ports of Spain. I beg to remark that the packets to me which have contained information have apparently been opened and resealed.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 199

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, at sea, 29th January, 1804.

Sir,—Your letter, dated the 18th instant, I have received, with an extract of one from Mr. George Curling, containing intelligence of the enemy's privateers cruising off the Western Islands, and signifying the direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to me to send the *Endymion* to cruise off those islands, for the protection of the trade. You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships that ship has been detached to the westward some time in quest of the enemy's cruisers. But being directed, after a certain time, to cruise off Cape Finisterre, I shall, the moment I can possibly do it, order a frigate of force upon the service off the Western Islands, as directed by their Lordships.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 200

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EVAN NEPEAN

Ville de Paris, Torbay, 29th January, 1804.

Sir,—I request that you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty

¹ On January 29, the *Naiad* was detached on this service.

that the wind having blown from south to south-west for a considerable time, on the 24th we made the Lizard to the westward of us. The wind backing to the southward obliged us to stand to the eastward. I plied off the Start yesterday, to see how the weather would turn out upon the full moon. But at night it came to blow hard again at south-west. I therefore was obliged to stand in, and anchor here with the Colossus (Rear-Admiral Collingwood) and Dreadnought.

I saw four large ships yesterday, standing to the westward, which appeared to have come from Plymouth.

The Neptune, I find by a letter from Captain Drury, received damage on the 19th, but I shall desire him to inform me how it happened he came to part company on the 8th.

The Prince is this moment arrived here.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 201

*CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN RYDER (REGULATING
OFFICER, FALMOUTH)*

Ville de Paris, Torbay, 31st January, 1804.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the captains or commanders of any of his Majesty's ships or vessels under my command that I put into this Bay on the 28th inst., to prevent being driven farther to the eastward; and I shall sail from hence the moment there is a prospect of my being able to get off Ushant, where I shall expect to meet the rest of the squadron. It is probable some of the ships may call at Falmouth to make inquiry there for me.

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 202

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN RATHBONE

(SANTA MARGARITA)¹

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed immediately to proceed in the ship you command off the Penmarcks, upon the coast of France, where you are to cruise for the purpose of intercepting the enemy's vessels, occasionally stretching off Lorient to endeavour to gain information of the proceedings and designs of the enemy on that part of the coast, where a considerable armament is reported to be getting forward ; and should you obtain any intelligence which you may deem of sufficient importance for me to be immediately informed of, you are to communicate the same to me without a moment's loss of time, and to send, by every opportunity that may offer, your proceedings, with any observations you may have been able to make.

In the event of your falling in with any squadron of the enemy's ships, with transports and troops, you are to endeavour to keep sight of them, if possible, until you have ascertained their destination, upon which you are immediately to join me off Ushant—or wherever else you may learn I am with the squadron—with the information, or proceed to communicate the same to the commanding officer of the ships under my orders now cruising off Ferrol, and consisting of six sail of the line ; but in which you are to act as circumstances may appear to you to require, or to proceed to Ireland, if the expedition

¹ Before proceeding upon this service, the Santa Margarita had been detached to land troops on the coast of Ireland.

should appear to you to relate to any intended immediate attack upon that island.

A squadron of line-of-battle ships under my command are cruising off Cape Clear and on that part of the coast of Ireland, under the direction of Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder.

During your cruise you are to afford every protection and assistance to the trade of his Majesty's subjects, and you are to continue upon this service until further orders.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, Torbay, 1st February, 1804.

No. 203

*ADMIRALTY TO CORNWALLIS*¹

4th February, 1804.

Their Lordships regret that the wind did not admit of the squadron's putting to sea at that time, but take it for granted that Sir Thomas Graves, with the *Foudroyant* and *Conqueror*, would return to the anchorage on finding that the *Ville de Paris* had not weighed, as it is of the utmost consequence the ships should be kept together as much as possible under the present circumstances of the enemy's force at Brest.

¹ A minute upon Cornwallis's dispatch, Torbay, February 2nd, representing that the wind had backed to the southward and kept him in the bay. The Admiral sailed from Torbay on February 2nd. The weather in January had been exceedingly tempestuous, but the 'gallant Cornwallis,' the 'indefatigable naval hero' of the '*Naval Chronicle*,' was ever feverishly anxious to regain his station when driven from it. The *Blue Peter*, when he was compelled to bear up for shelter, was always flying on board his ship. The violent gales of the end of December, which compelled him to retire to Torbay, were succeeded by hurricanes about January 9th, 21st, and 28th, which inflicted great damage and loss of masts and yards on the squadron. Among the vessels which suffered were the *San Josef*, *Impétueux*, *Foudroyant*, *Boadicea*, and *Loire*.

No. 204

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, in Betanzos Bay, 6th February, 1804.

Sir,—I had the honour to address you by the *Naiad* on the 3rd ult., and I have now that of replying to your letters and orders sent by the *Pickle* schooner, which reached me on the 1st instant, having been put on board the *Dragon* on the 29th ult., at which time her lieutenant informed Captain Griffith of his intention to bear up for your flag, having received considerable damage. This, of course, deprived me of the opportunity of making a reply sooner.

The *Naiad* will have made known to you my intention of anchoring the squadron in this bay, and the south-west winds having set in to blow hard on the 4th, I ran for the anchorage, leaving the *Dragon*, *Hussar*, and cutter at sea, meaning to change the ships as they completed their water and were refreshed. We have gained a very important point in so doing, and I am happy to say the bay equals our fullest expectations, having never started one anchor during the violent gales we have had, and from which, had we continued at sea, we should in all probability have been completely crippled. I had been anxious to effect this purpose before, but it was difficult to get Captain Wallis to make proof of its safety, before I took upon myself so much responsibility, by risking a squadron in a bay ill spoken of by the Spaniards themselves, and said to have foul ground.

The *Dragon* and *Hussar* having been blown off on the 14th ult., I sent the *Spencer* to take their situation, but so severe have the gales been, and so heavy the sea upon this coast, that she also lost her

station, and from her not returning with the Dragon and Hussar on the 1st instant, I fear she may have sustained some damage (as did the latter).

The Tonnant, Malta, and Ardent were so reduced in provisions (although at short allowance) as to impose upon me the necessity of making considerable purchases of bread and flour, wine, and fresh beef, the latter of which is supplied regularly two days a week.

We have received three hundred bags of bread, and are promised three hundred more in a few days; with a hundred pipes of wine, so that during the good understanding that subsists there is little doubt of obtaining what we want, notwithstanding the loud complaints of the French commodore, Gourdon, who is excessively irritated at our taking this position, which has not only re-established the crews in perfect health and spirits, saved all the wear and tear of the ships, but gives complete checkmate to any motions he may make, and, unless when the north-east winds come on we should be blown from our anchors in the mouth of the harbour, where the ground is not quite so good as here, he can hardly have any hope of escaping to Corunna.

The Hussar's bowsprit, which was badly sprung, we have taken out, fished, shortened, and re-stepped.

I have made her (the Hussar) the bearer of this letter in consequence of a dispatch, yesterday received by a King's messenger from Madrid, of great importance, which I forward with the different correspondences I have had since anchoring here. I have taken out of her all the provisions she could spare, as she may be completed should you, sir, not think it necessary to send her into port and replace her by another frigate.¹

¹ The Hussar, in proceeding with this dispatch to Cornwallis, was lost on the Saints on February 8th. The Magnificent brought

We have taken considerable pains to stand well with the people here, and have been happy enough to succeed in giving them satisfaction. I shall therefore be very cautious in proceeding to act as Mr. Frere desires, before it becomes absolutely necessary, which, from appearance, will not be for many weeks, if at all, and I hope to have the pleasure of meeting your approbation thereon.¹

The Spartiate made her appearance on the 9th ult. I supplied her with ten days' provisions, and sent her to Sir Robert Calder, from whom I have not heard since the Ganges arrived. I inclose her track while absent, with the state and condition of the squadron, also the necessary reports of Ferrol and Corunna, with the defects.

In consequence of the great discontent on board the Dutch ship, I privately had an offer made to receive them here, and promised them the bounty. Many officers have left her, and eight men have been received; sixty or seventy are said to be gone into the interior for Cadiz, the roads to this place being guarded.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE A

MR. FRERE TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Madrid, 28th January, 1804.

Sir,—It appears that this Court have it in contemplation to send out a considerable expedition

Captain Wilkinson to Cornwallis off Ushant on the 14th, and on the next day the dispatches were sent on by the Fox.

¹ See No. 221 (p. 290) for Cornwallis's orders to the senior officer off Ferrol in regard to these views and the urgent suggestions of Mr. Frere contained in his letter (Inclosure A) here given.

from the port of Ferrol, consisting, at the lowest estimation, of about six thousand men. Though it is not evident that they have any immediate object of hostility in view, yet, in the present situation of the two countries, I should consider myself as wholly inexcusable if I were to connive at the execution of a measure of such an important, and, under all its circumstances, of so suspicious a nature.

I must therefore recommend it to you as an object (as it appears to me) of the utmost consequence to his Majesty's service, that the sailing of the above-mentioned armament be prevented, first, by a declaration of your being authorised to oppose it by force, and finally, by the exertion of force, if unhappily such an extremity should become necessary.

The expedition cannot, I suppose, be in a state to put to sea for some weeks, and it is possible that the protests which I shall think it my duty to make may so far delay it as to render it possible to receive instructions from England. In the meantime, however, and unless you should yourself receive instructions to the contrary, I beg to be considered as charging myself with any responsibility which may attach to the measure which I have recommended.

As it is my wish to avoid any needless appearance of menace, I should advise the utmost secrecy upon the subject of this letter. I shall myself communicate it to the Ministers here, but to no one else. They will, I apprehend, be more disposed to give way when they find that our discretion enables them to do so with decency.

I remain, &c.,

J. H. FRERE.

INCLOSURE B

MR. FRERE TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

Madrid, 28th January, 1804.

Dear Sir,—The corresponding piece of paper, which is torn from the corner of this sheet,¹ will probably be delivered to you by a Royalist, who, under pretence of fitting out a privateer, undertakes an expedition to supply his friends with powder.

If it were possible to send a frigate off St. Gilles or elsewhere to the north of Sables, it might be of great service to their cause, and might enable them to keep up a communication, which is now cut off, between the Morbihan and La Vendée. It might likewise afford a means of retreat to their chiefs in case they should continue to be pressed and pursued in the manner they have lately. They are, I understand, in great want of firearms. I do not suppose you can have any great number to spare, but they would be of great service.

In case you should find it possible to detach a vessel thither, the signal which I have given them is that of firing one shot, then hoisting a white ensign, and firing a second shot immediately after; the answer from the shore to be three musket shots.

I am so jealous of your good opinion that I must add a line (and much to the purpose), to disculpate myself from any idea which you might entertain of my having in any way excited this unhappy and ill-timed movement. It has been wholly spontaneous, or, more properly speaking, a necessary effect of the various tyrannical measures of the Government, and particularly of the conscription. The chiefs have been hurried away by the impetuous

¹ The corner of the sheet is torn off.

resentment of the people, and obliged to put themselves at their head. Many have been already the victims of their compliance, and of their wish to retain their influence by sharing their dangers. In this state of things every feeling of policy or of humanity seems to point them out as objects for protection.

As I may not have an opportunity of sending a messenger so often as I may wish to write, I would beg you to observe that every letter which is sealed with black wax will contain a postscript in lemon juice. Whenever I do send a messenger, I should be glad to avail myself of the opportunity for the execution of any commission which you might honour me with. Madrid does not offer much, but as long as I remain here my best services will be always at your disposal, and I shall esteem myself happy in the occasion of testifying the sincere respect with which

I remain, &c.,
J. H. FRERE.¹

INCLOSURE C

State of the Spanish Naval Force in Ferrol

Two ships of 80 guns. Half ready. Men in-rolled for them in the vicinity, and ready when called upon.

¹ The following were Cornwallis's orders to Captain Durham, Defiance, in regard to the aid asked by Mr. Frere for the French Royalist :—'Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 14th February, 1804. Sir,—I send you the inclosed most secret information, communicated by Mr. Frere. You will be pleased to attend thereto, and to afford every assistance to the design and expedition which you may be enabled to do should the vessel come your way.—I am, &c., W. CORNWALLIS.' The *Atalante* was dispatched to the vessels upon the coast with intelligence concerning the Royalist vessel.

One three-decker, } commissioned and rigged,
 Two of 74 guns } stowing their holds slowly.
 Two frigates ; will be ready with the first ships.

Four three-deckers, eight }
 two - deckers, and } out of commission.
 some frigates in the }
 arsenal }

One of the line, and two frigates building.

The troops in garrison fluctuate from eight to ten thousand.

Tonnant, Betanzos Bay, 5th February, 1804.

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE D

State of the Enemy's Force in Ferrol and Corunna

In Ferrol (French)	{ Argonaute, 74. Went into dock on the 13 ulto., and is expected to be taken out in the spring tides of this month ; but I think not until March.	{ All ready for sea and under pressing orders to proceed to Corunna the first opportunity, under Monsieur Gourdon.	
			{ Héros . 74. Redoutable . 74. Fougueux . 74. Brig-corvette.
In Ferrol (Dutch)	{ Oldenbarneveldt, 64. Under the orders of the French commodore, and is ready for sea, but is to go no farther than Corunna. I understand great discontent and desertion prevails in consequence.		

In Corunna	{	Duguay-Trouin	74	} ready for sea.
(French)		Guerrière	. 44	
		Revanche	. 36	

Tonnant, Betanzos Bay, 5th February, 1804.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 205

CAPTAIN MAITLAND TO CORNWALLIS

Boadicea, off Ushant, 6th February, 1804.

Sir,—In answer to your letter of the 31st of January last, respecting my conduct on falling in with the *Mercurio*, Spanish packet, I beg leave to inform you for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that from the manner in which the Spanish ship made sail from his Majesty's ship under my command, I had every reason to suppose she was an enemy, and used my utmost endeavour to bring him to as soon as possible, which, after a chase of eight hours, I did ; and sent a boat on board for an officer and the necessary papers to satisfy me she was a ship belonging to the King of Spain ; and sent him on board his ship the moment I got the necessary information, which took some time longer than it otherwise would have done on account of the different reports of the Spanish first and second captains, the one having said she had money on board for the King of Spain, and the other declaring she had not.

I also beg leave to assure you that I treated the Spanish officer who came on board with every respect and attention, which he appeared at that time to be very sensible of, and had nothing to advance against my proceedings.

I am, &c.,

J. W. MAITLAND.

No. 206

*Observations made by the Joseph Cutter of the
Enemy's Ships in the Outer Roads of Brest, on
Tuesday, 7th February, 1804*

Ships of the line	.	.	.	Eleven.
Rasées	.	.	.	Two.
Frigates	.	.	.	Three.
Corvettes	.	.	.	Four.
Merchant ships.	.	.	.	Two.
Brigs	.	.	.	Two.

One Admiral, nearly in the centre of the line,
and two Rear-Admirals.

The ships appeared to be all ready for sea,
having all their sails bent, and topgallant yards
crossed.

THOMAS USSHER, Lt.

No. 207

CAPTAIN PROWSE TO CORNWALLIS

Observations in Brest Roads

1. Line-of-battle ship (two decks).
2. Ditto ditto.
3. Ditto ditto.
4. Hulk.
5. Hulk.
6. Line-of-battle ship (two decks).
7. Frigate with topmast struck.
8. Two-deck ship.
9. Two-deck ship.

10. A frigate.
11. A two-deck ship.
12. Armée en flûte.
13. A two-deck ship.
14. A ditto.
15. A frigate unrigged.
16. A two-deck ship.
17. A ditto with flag at the main.
18. A frigate.
19. A two-deck ship.
20. A small frigate.
21. A small ship-corvette.
22. A two-deck ship. Rear-Admiral.
23. A corvette.
24. A brig.

In general, their yards and topmasts struck.

February 12, 1804.

(Signed) W. PROWSE.

No. 208

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th February, 1804.

Sir,—From the information which has been received relative to the designs and force of the enemy's ships at Brest, there is reason to believe they are in greater force than can be observed from our ships. A very strict look-out is, therefore, necessary, and for you to be constantly upon your guard. I should think, as the wind seems to set in from the eastward, you might occasionally anchor, which has been before practised.

I shall place some ships to look out between you and the squadron for the purpose of communicating to me the motions of the enemy. Upon any ap-

pearance of their movement you will instantly detach a ship to make the same known to me. The provisions on board the *Terrible* you will be pleased to distribute to the ships with you who are most in want.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 209

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th February, 1804.

Sir,—I inclose, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the copy of a letter to me from Sir Edward Pellew, with those relating to the intelligence therein referred to, which I received by the *Sheerness* cutter this morning.

I shall, the moment I am enabled to do so, send a frigate to him, but at present I have only the *Sirius*, who is inshore off of Brest. I ordered the *Spencer*, as soon as she arrived in Cawsand Bay, immediately to replenish and return without a moment's loss of time to Sir Edward Pellew, and it is my intention to detach the *Northumberland* immediately to him, who has just joined company with the *Impétueux*.

You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships that I received by the *Terrible* this morning your letter marked 'Secret,' dated the 7 instant, to which I shall pay every attention.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE A

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, Betanzos Bay, 9th February, 1804.

Sir,—The inclosed letters¹ came to me last night, and are of such importance that I send the Sheerness to you with them, as they have caused me to combine the possibility of the enemy's striking a blow at us here with the report I have from Ferrol, where a council of war was held two days since by the French commodore, on the question of ordering the ships at Corunna to sail the first opportunity, without waiting the division at Ferrol; this question was decided in the negative, on the ground of expected relief from the squadron at Toulon or Brest.

I shall not altogether give up this anchorage on this information, as Lord Nelson speaks only of his belief of the enemy having sailed, not positively as to its being a fact. We shall hold ourselves on guard, and do our best without the Spencer, which ship, I fear, has sustained some damage, and gone home.

I shall hope soon to receive directions from you, as the necessity of having a frigate at command to communicate becomes more necessary than ever.

It is to be hoped the Sheerness may reach your flag before anything leaves you to come this way.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
ED. PELLEW.

¹ Mr. Frere's letter, covering that of Lord Nelson, being unimportant, is omitted here.

INCLOSURE B

LORD NELSON TO MR. FRERE

Victory, 23rd January, 1804.

Sir,—I have just received information that leads me to believe that the French fleet is either put to sea, or on the eve of it, and bound to the eastward, towards Naples and Sicily. I am this moment making sail in the direction I think most likely to intercept them. His Majesty's fleet is in high health, and the event of a meeting ought not to be doubted.

I am, &c.,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

[At this time Nelson was possessed with the belief that the French were about to put to sea, and received reports that the forces from Brest and Ferrol were intended to concentrate in the Mediterranean. Pellew, on the other hand, was prepared for the appearance of the Toulon squadron off Ferrol. Nelson continually speculated with anxiety as to the destination of the French. 'It is at best but a guess,' he wrote to Ball, 'and the world attaches wisdom to him that guesses right.' Early in the blockade he had inclined to the view that the French were bound out of the Mediterranean. His mind fluctuated sometimes between Ireland and the Levant. In December he wrote, 'certainly out of the Mediterranean,' and on January 16th, 'Egypt or Ireland, and I rather lean to the latter.' Then his view changed to that expressed above, and to the belief that Egypt was 'the favourite and ultimate object of the Corsican tyrant.' Thirty thousand troops were reported at the time to be ready to

embark at Marseilles and Nice, but it proved that at none of the ports were the expeditions ready, and the immediate alarm passed away.]

No. 210

*GOVERNOR CONTADOR TO SIR EDWARD
PELLEW*

Ferrol, 14th February, 1804.

Sir,—I am informed by the Governor of the Castle of Palmo that a boat, belonging to the squadron under your command, and having an English officer on board, has passed through the mouth of the harbour, and entered it in the middle of the night, without obeying the Governor's orders not to proceed to their destination before daylight, according to the established orders for all boats and small vessels, either national or strangers.

I am also informed that the squadron under your command has anchored at the mouth of the harbour, between the batteries, which greatly annoys the coming in or going out.

Your Eminence knows that I have strictly conformed myself to the laws of nations and of neutrality, not only by facilitating the supplying the squadron under your command with meat, bread, and all other provisions, refreshments, and succours, according to the rules of hospitality, but that even I did not object to your ships entering the harbours under my command when the hardships of the sea, and the damages sustained by the weather, made it necessary; but as it is contrary to the same laws and rules of neutrality that the boats of the squadron under your command should enter in this port, contrary to orders, in the night time, which is not allowed even with flags of truce, or that the same

squadron, without being forced to it by distress of weather, or any other necessity, should anchor at the harbour's mouth, and in the very entrance of it, I find myself obliged to request your Eminence to acquaint me with the motive which may have induced you to act in this manner, and I have no doubt that henceforward your Eminence will take example of my conduct, and faithfully observe the laws of nations and neutrality by not sending your boats at night into our ports, and making use of the Spanish territories, harbours, and succours but as much as hospitality requires, and so as not to give room to suspect that I connive to the abuse of that hospitality, to the prejudice of other nations, which are equally on terms of neutrality with this country, and have ships of war in this harbour.

I beg your Excellency will believe me, &c.,

DIEGO CONTADOR,

Governor of Ferrol, &c.

No. 211

SIR E. PELLEW TO GOVERNOR CONTADOR

His Britannic Majesty's ship Tonnant, off Ferrol,

16th February, 1804.

Sir,—I was last evening honoured with your Excellency's letter of yesterday's date, and am concerned to find that it wears so much the complexion of real complaint. The want of a person to translate the Castilian language has delayed my reply, and I have to apprehend that we have not put a proper construction on all its parts. I did not, however, lose a moment in calling to account the officer who broke my positive orders by entering your harbour in the night. His defence I inclose herewith,

observing only that this young officer was actuated by no improper motive whatever. It was the giddiness of youth. The boat was certainly not armed, and was the smallest in the cutter, but so little am I disposed to justify the officer that I have put him under arrest, to be tried by court-martial, where he will meet the punishment due to his insubordination.

I trust, however (and have great pleasure in the expectation), from the personal inclination your Excellency has so uniformly evinced by affording the squadron of his Britannic Majesty every supply consistent with neutrality and friendship, that this trivial circumstance (which I could not control) will not tend to disturb the good understanding and harmony so happily commenced. I shall manifest, by every means, my strong inclination for its continuance, and my regret at any event which may disturb it.

With respect to the occasional anchoring of the ships under my command, your Excellency has been misinformed. I trust it is not such as can give umbrage to your Excellency, or to the Spanish nation. I am sent upon the coast of Galicia by the King, my master, to protect the commerce of his subjects trading to the ports of Spain. In performing this service it cannot, with truth, be said that I have given trouble to the ships of any nation, either entering or departing from them. I have acted up to the spirit of exact neutrality and the existing treaties, and, with the exception of the cutter (to which your Excellency had given permission to go into Ferrol to receive supplies), there is no ship anchored within the batteries, but in the open ocean. In easterly winds I occasionally anchor to prevent being blown off, and in westerly winds I anchor to prevent being shipwrecked upon the coast. I cannot give your Excellency two more powerful reasons,

and I entertain no doubt that they will prove satisfactory, and that I shall continue to experience the same attention and respect to the flag of my sovereign as is shown to that of any other neutral nation enjoying the benefit of amity and peace.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.¹

No. 212

LIEUTENANT USSHER TO CORNWALLIS

Joseph, hired armed cutter, off Brest, 17th February, 1804.

Sir,—Coming through the Passage du Raz this morning, I fell in with, and captured, the *chasse-marée* Quatre Sœurs, laden with brandy and wine, from Bordeaux, bound to Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOS. USSHER.

No. 213

*CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN LORD A. BEAUCLERC
(MAJESTIC)*

Memorandum.

Your Lordship is hereby directed to proceed in the ship you command towards the inshore ships off

¹ The officer of the Nimble cutter explained that, being ready to go the next morning into the harbour for provisions, he found, at midnight, that the buoy of the cutter's anchor had gone, and, proceeding in search of it, the tide carried him into the harbour. The Governor, expressing himself in very friendly terms, interceded for him, and said, in reference to another cause of complaint, that Rear-Admiral Gourdon, at his request, had promised to punish a French bluejacket who had driven a boat-hook into a boat of the British squadron. (See No. 140, p. 183.) The Governor had made different dispositions in regard to the stations of the boats in order to prevent collisions in the future.

Brest, taking such a station between them and the squadron that any movement of the enemy's, or other information, may be communicated by signal, or otherwise, through you from Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves, or ships sent by him, who is now at anchor off the Black Rocks, without a moment's loss of time. Your Lordship will occasionally stand within sight of the Rear-Admiral's signals, and then return within sight of those from the squadron.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 21st February, 1804.

No. 214

CORNWALLIS TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

Pursuant to direction from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, you are hereby required and directed immediately to proceed in the ship you command to Plymouth.¹

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 21st February, 1804.

No. 215

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN DURHAM

(DEFIANCE)

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd February, 1804.

Sir,—The enemy's squadron appearing in force at Brest, I am to desire you will, without a moment's

¹ The Tonnant returned to Cawsand Bay to refit towards the end of February, Captain Sutton in the Mars relieving Sir Edward Pellew as senior officer off Ferrol. Pellew sailed for his station again on March 27th.

loss of time, proceed with the line-of-battle ships under your direction to join me off Ushant, or wherever else you may learn I am at the time with the squadron, leaving the *Boadicea* off Rochefort for the purpose of watching the motions of the enemy's ships there, and to gain intelligence, which is to be communicated as before directed.¹

I am, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

P.S.—You will furnish Captain Maitland with the information relative to the designs of the Royalists, who are on board a French vessel expected on the coast, according to my letter sent to you by the *Atalante*, on the 14th instant.

No. 216

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 22nd February, 1804.

Sir,—I have to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that in consequence of the two line-of-battle ships of the enemy, and two frigates, having gone from Lorient to Rochefort, where they arrived the 13th instant, and were seen there at anchor by Captain Scott, of the *Niobe*, I have recalled the *Defiance* and the *Impétueux*, which latter ship I had, by direction of their Lordships, some days before sent to relieve the *Goliath*. The *Boadicea* I have ordered to remain cruising there for the purpose of watching

¹ Orders had been issued to Captain Maitland to proceed off Rochefort on February 9. By the departure of Captain Durham he was left in command there. These orders contained instructions analogous to those given to Captain Rathbone on February 1st concerning the anticipated descent upon the Irish coast (p. 261).

the enemy's ships at that port, as well as any operations carrying on upon that part of the coast.

The ships in Brest Road having very much increased of late, as their Lordships will perceive by the report of Captain Prowse, which I inclose, I have stationed Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves with a few fast-sailing two-deck ships immediately off the port, and others between them and the squadron, to make signals and give the earliest intelligence of their movements; and I shall keep the remainder of the force with me collected, ready to pursue should the enemy put to sea.

I send herewith copies of the communications made to me by Captain Scott.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE A

List of ships in Brest Roads reconnoitred by his Majesty's ship Sirius, 20th February, 1804

No.

1. Line-of-battle ship
2. Ditto.
3. Ditto, yards and topmasts struck (Rear-Admiral).
4. Complete for sea; apparently a three-deck ship.
5. Two-deck line-of-battle ship, with topmasts struck.
6. Hulk.
7. Small vessel (a schooner).
8. Line-of-battle ship.
9. Frigate, without topmasts.
10. Line-of-battle ship.
11. Hulk.
12. Corvette.

13. Line-of-battle ship.
14. Ditto.
15. Line-of-battle ship.
16. A schooner.
17. Corvette, with jury masts.
18. Line-of-battle ship.
19. Ditto, three-decker (Admiral).
20. Two-decker.
21. Frigate fit for sea.
22. Brig, without topmasts.
23. Corvette, ditto.
24. Line-of-battle ship.
25. Ditto.
26. Three-deck ship (Rear-Admiral).
27. Three-deck ship.
28. Line-of-battle ship (two-decker).
- 29 and 30. Two frigates ready for sea.

INCLOSURE B

CAPTAIN SCOTT TO CORNWALLIS

Niobe, 20th February, 1804.

Sir,—Having remained off Rochefort in his Majesty's ship under my command, from the 12th to the 17th instant, without having seen or heard anything of the *Defiance* and *Goliath*, and the wind continuing to blow hard from the eastward, which would prevent their getting on the coast, should they (as I supposed) have been to the westward, I have thought it my duty to make the best of my way to join you, and communicate the accompanying intelligence, in which I am confirmed by the observations of the officers of the *Niobe*.

I have the honour, &c.,

M. H. SCOTT.

INCLOSURE C

Remarks, &c., on board his Majesty's ship Niobe, between the 11th of February, 1804, and the 16th following.

On Saturday, the 11th, the wind blowing hard from the south-west, and the weather being very hazy, I anchored under Isle Dieu. The people on it fired several shot at us, but which did not reach us.

On Sunday, the 12th, the wind coming round to the northward, I weighed and made sail towards Rochefort in hopes of finding the *Defiance* and *Goliath*, for whom I have topmasts on board. On my arrival off the *Pertuis d'Antioche*, and not seeing the ships, I stood up towards Basque Roads, supposing they might be there, and, if not, which was the case, that I might reconnoitre the French ships at an anchor near the *Ile d'Aix*. Of those I had a very good view, having stood to within six miles of them. I perceived them to be one three-decker, one two-decker, apparently a 74, two frigates, and a corvette. The three-decker had her lower yards and topmasts down, the seventy-four and frigates had everything aloft, but only one of the frigates had her sails bent.

During the night we stood off and on with the wind northerly. A little before daylight, on the morning of the 13th, four large ships were seen to windward of us, standing to the eastward. At daylight I made the private signal to them, and fired two guns with it at different times, which, not being answered, convinced me they were French ships. However I tacked, and stood towards them, when I perceived them to be four ships of war, apparently two of the line and two frigates, standing in to the *Pertuis d'Antioche*, and soon after they hoisted French pennants, and made signals to the shore.

As they did not make any attempt to chase the Niobe, I kept working to windward, in order to get into the Pertuis, and to get a better sight of them, but, seeing an American brig to leeward, I bore up to speak her and endeavour to gain some intelligence of them from her, by which we were not able to get a good sight of them that evening—though we saw the mast-heads of them at an anchor.

On the 14th I determined again to reconnoitre them, and having arrived within five or six miles of them, I perceived there were now four sail of the line, four frigates, and a corvette, at an anchor near Ile d'Aix; the three-decker which we observed before with her lower yards and topmasts down had now got them up; she had a flag at the mizen, and one of the two-deckers had a broad pennant at the main. On the 16th they were again observed in the same state.

I have not been able to ascertain from whence the force came, but when we first saw them they were close upon a wind on the larboard tack, the wind N.E.b.N.

M. H. SCOTT.

No. 217

Intelligence gained by Captain Durham

23rd February, 1804.

Spoke the American schooner Temperance, Paul Knowles, master, from Bordeaux. Sailed from thence on the evening of the 21st. An embargo was laid on the 26th ulto. and taken off about the 12th instant, during which time 30 gunboats, with a number of troops on board, and 12 sail of merchant ships, of between 300 and 400 tons, with about 6,000 troops on board, had sailed from Bordeaux to Rochefort.

The troops were marched down the south-west side of the river, and embarked a considerable distance below the town. The last division of gunboats are nearly ready to sail for Rochefort. He thinks near 300 have been built at Bordeaux. The gunboat No. 270 was at anchor in the river as he passed.

February 26.—Boarded a Danish vessel from Bordeaux. The master of which says that ten or twelve large ships, from 400 to 700 tons, quite light, with a number of troops on board, accompanied by 30 or 40 gunboats and brigs, sailed the beginning of this month for Rochefort—no more transports remaining at Bordeaux. A great number of gunboats and gun-vessels fitting out. The next division will be ready to sail in a few days. No. 280 was fitting, and it is believed near 300 gunboats and brigs have been fitted out at Bordeaux. Great exertions are making in every department to forward the vessels for the invasion. In the entrance of Bordeaux river are one large ship (a guardship), 3 frigates, and 2 brigs, men-of-war. Four of the transports still remain at the bottom of the river, waiting for a southerly wind to sail for Rochefort. The above ships passed through the Maumusson Pass.

P. C. DURHAM.

No. 218

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN PATRICK CAMPBELL
(DORIS)¹

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
Blue, &c.*

It being probable that the enemy's squadron may immediately put to sea from Brest, you are hereby

¹ Captain (afterwards Vice-Admiral Sir Patrick) Campbell (1773-1841), a son of Colonel John Campbell of Melfort, Argyll-

required and directed to proceed in the ship you command to the southward of the Saints, where you are to cruise, with all possible vigilance, for the purpose of watching the Passage du Raz; and, upon the appearance of any of the enemy's ships in force, to use your utmost endeavours to make the same known by signal, or otherwise, to the nearest ships to you belonging to the squadron, that the intelligence may be communicated to me without a moment's loss of time. Having made the communication to other ships, you are to follow at a distance so as to lead the squadron to the enemy.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 24th February, 1804.

No. 219

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 26th February, 1804.

Sir,—I have to request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the enemy's squadron in Brest Roads, from a report made to me by Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas

shire, became a lieutenant in the navy, September 1794, and was promoted commander in September 1797. On the night of July 7, 1800, in command of the *Dart*, rated as a sloop, but armed with thirty 32-pounder carronades, and having two gun-brigs and four fire-ships in company, he entered Dunkirk Harbour, took the *Désirée* frigate, 38, by boarding, and carried her to sea. James ranks this action with Cochrane's capture of the *Gamo* and other notable acts of bravery, and I shall be able to show that the spirit which actuated Campbell at Dunkirk in 1800 was not diminished off Brest in 1804. The *Doris*, to which he was appointed in September 1803, was lost on a rock in Quiberon Bay, January 1805. He afterwards commanded the *Unité* (1807) in the Adriatic, and in 1811 and 1827 other ships in the Mediterranean. As a rear-admiral he was in command at the Cape of Good Hope 1834-37, and was made a K.C.B. in 1836.

Graves, are in the same situation as when last reconnoitred. It appears that they are busily employed in exercising their sails and in signals. Captain Jervis, in the *Magnificent*, returned yesterday from the Saints ; from what he says there are hopes that the crew of the *Hussar* may have been saved, though prisoners.¹ Captain Wilkinson goes in by the *Sirius*.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS,

No. 220

*CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN ELPHINSTONE
(DIAMOND)*

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed immediately to proceed in the ship you command off Lorient, and to cruise in her from thence as far as Isle Dieu, for the purpose of watching the motions of the enemy on that part of the coast ; and you are to be very vigilant upon this service, using your utmost endeavours to obtain information of their proceedings and designs, occasionally communicating with the *Boadicea*, who is stationed off Rochefort,

¹ The *Hussar*, coming from Sir Edward Pellew to Cornwallis, was lost upon the Saints in the night of February 8th. The storms of this period greatly distressed the ships, and many went to Cawsand Bay for refuge. The French also suffered. Admiral Martin, naval Prefect at Rochefort, reported to Decrès, on February 8, the loss of seventeen vessels at and near the Sables d'Olonne, of which four belonged to the invasion flotilla, the *Rapace* xebec, the *Jeanne* schooner, the *Jeannette* lugger, and the *Désirée* *chasse-marée*.

for the same purpose, where it is said armaments are in great forwardness. And should you gain any intelligence which you may deem of sufficient importance for me to be immediately informed of, you are directly to return with it, and to communicate to me, by every opportunity that may offer, your proceedings, with any observations you may have been able to make. In the event of your falling in with any squadron of the enemy's ships, with transports and troops, you are to endeavour to keep sight of them, if possible, until you have ascertained their destination, upon which you are, without a moment's loss of time, to join me, or proceed to give the information, as circumstances may appear to you to require.

Several ships belonging to the squadron under my command are cruising off Ferrol, for the purpose of blocking up some ships of the enemy. Should, therefore, the expedition expected to sail from Brest, or from any of the enemy's ports, escape without my being able to fall in with them, and you should observe the enemy in force steering that way, you will also endeavour to give timely notice of their approach to the officer commanding those ships, and should it appear to you to relate to any intended immediate attack upon Ireland, you are to proceed thither with the intelligence, with all possible dispatch. During your cruise you are to afford every protection and assistance to the trade of his Majesty's subjects. I inclose herewith the copy of a letter containing secret information relative to the designs of the royalists. Should the vessel come your way, you are to attend thereto.

Given &c., Ville de Paris, 27th February, 1804.

No. 221

[Most Secret.] (By the Rambler.)

*CORNWALLIS TO SIR EDWARD PELLEW, OR
THE SENIOR OFFICER OFF FERROL*

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
Blue, &c.*

The Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received information from Mr. Frere, his Majesty's Minister at the court of Madrid, that it is in the contemplation of that court to send out a considerable expedition from the port of Ferrol, consisting at the lowest estimation of about six thousand men; and also that, on the same being communicated to Sir Edward Pellew, he had determined to take measures to prevent its proceeding, first, by a declaration of authority to oppose it by force, and finally by the exertion of force, if unfortunately such an extremity should become necessary; and whereas their Lordships highly approve of the caution with which it appeared to be his intention to act in consequence of Mr. Frere's communication:

You are, in pursuance of their Lordships' directions,¹ in the event of the expedition sailing, to make use of every means in your power for the purpose of detaining the ships and troops, and of sending them, with as little delay as possible, to some of the ports in the United Kingdom, transmitting to the Secre-

¹ The orders reached Cornwallis on the 28th February at 3 P.M. by the Swift cutter from Plymouth. Mr. Frere's information and suggestions for action were contained in a letter to Pellew, dated from Madrid January 28th. See No. 204, p. 263, and its Inclosure A.

tary of the Admiralty for their Lordships' information a particular account of your proceedings.

Given &c., Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 28th February, 1804.

[At about this period the French invasion flotilla again suffered severely. Admiral Martin, naval Prefect at Rochefort, reported that, during a violent squall on the night of March 2nd, boats of the first section of the second division of his flotilla, under command of Lieutenant Letourneur, were driven from their anchors, with great damage. At the same time the second section was compelled to take refuge in the port of the Sables. The next night was tempestuous, and the commander of each boat was authorised to navigate for safety as he judged best. One flotilla was dispersed. The Prefect concluded with the remark that the operations were singularly unlucky. 'When the elements permit us to navigate, the enemy is at our heels, and I am persuaded that, on the return of fine weather, we shall find great difficulty in our communications.' On March 7 he reported that the English had taken a pilot boat belonging to Royan, and had armed it for use against the coastwise trade. Admiral Martin thought the minister would have heard of the communications between this boat and the English, since the war department must have reported on the subject.¹]

¹ The punishment of those who communicated with the English was severe and might include torture. Napoleon to General Soult, commanding the camp at St. Omer, La Malmaison, 23rd Pluviôse year XII (13th February, 1804): 'Have the crew and gear of the fishing-boat, which communicated with the English, seized at once. I reproach myself with neglecting to have this done sooner. Make the skipper speak, and I even give you authority to promise him his pardon if he gives information; and, if he should seem to hesitate, you can go so far as to follow the custom as to men suspected of being spies, and squeeze his thumbs

No. 222

CAPTAIN ELPHINSTONE TO CORNWALLIS

Diamond, at sea, 5th March, 1804.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you that on Friday morning, when to the southward and westward of Belle Ile, I fell in with a French frigate, to whom we gave chase. Shortly after she was joined by another frigate. When within 3 miles of them they hauled their wind, and showed an indication to wait for our coming up, upon which we shortened sail, and, when reefing our topsails, they bore up and made sail to the westward, as before steering. I again bore up and made sail after them, and continued following them until Saturday evening. About Saturday noon we were within 3 miles of them, and made their force to be: one, a frigate with 15 guns on her main-deck, the other, a frigate with 14 guns on her main-deck, on each side. The larger frigate had greatly the superiority of sailing over the other—keeping way with her, having carried away her main topsail yard. On our losing sight of them I bore up and stood to the eastward, and on Sunday morning fell in with the Santa Margarita. Calculating, from their first course, they are bound to the westward, having steered west and by north, when the wind was easterly, and may be about 18 or 20 leagues to the westward of us at present, I shall continue, as the wind is westerly, to carry a press of sail to the westward, keeping the Santa Margarita for a week, when in the event of not falling in with

in the hammer of a musket.' *New Letters of Napoleon I.* p. 22.
See remarks following No. 182, p. 237.

them I shall return instantly to my station, or earlier if the wind should draw to the eastward.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOS. ELPHINSTONE.

No. 223

CAPTAIN PATRICK CAMPBELL TO CORNWALLIS

Doris, off Pointe du Raz, 10th March, 1804.

Sir,—I beg leave to inform you of my having taken and destroyed the French gunboat No. 351 of the second class, carrying one eighteen-pounder and thirty men, being one of a small convoy from Quimper to Brest, ultimately to Boulogne, laden with ammunition, provisions, &c. The rest escaped into Audierne, owing to my having sprung the main topmast, and split the sail in chase.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

PATK. CAMPBELL.

No. 224

LIEUTENANT ROBERT MILN TO CORNWALLIS¹

Hired armed cutter Mary, off Brest, 12th March, 1804.

Sir,—I have inclosed a return of two sloops which I captured going into Brest with provisions for the enemy's squadron. They were part of a convoy from Bordeaux to Brest.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBERT MILN.

L'Entreprise, M. Jasum, master, 44 tons, four men, laden with wine and brandy, belonging to Brest.

¹ Covering letter to the Admiralty dated off Ushant, March 6th, 1804.

Rosalie, Louis Detour, master, 43 tons, laden with flour, belonging to Bordeaux.

No. 225

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 13th March, 1804.

Sir,—I inclose, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a letter which I have received from Lieutenant Ussher, of the hired cutter Joseph. He has been employed watching the enemy off Brest, in which he has been very diligent and enterprising, having been during the night in Brest Road, in his boat, to make observations, and went along their line until he passed the Admiral's ship, when he was chased off by their boats. Captain Prowse was of opinion that the French Admiral's flag was flying on board a large two-deck ship, in which Mr. Ussher agrees, whose report I send herewith.

The Joseph cutter has again proved leaky, and I am forced, much against my inclination at the present moment, to send her into port.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

LIEUTENANT USSHER TO CORNWALLIS

Joseph, hired armed cutter, off Brest, 1st March, 1804.

Sir,—At 9 o'clock last night, being in the entrance of the Toulinguet Passage, I saw three sail ahead of me, which I gave chase to. One of them, St. Joseph schooner, of 2 four-pounders and thirty men, ran under the guns of Pointe de Pesreau,

which we scuttled and sank in deep water. Another, the *Diligence*, *chasse-marée*, ran under the guns of Pointe de la Chèvre, which I also hove off and scuttled. The third I lost from the darkness of the night. I am happy to say I had no loss on the occasion, though our boats were exposed to a fire of musketry from the beach.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
THOS. USSHER.

No. 226

[*Secret.*]

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN MASEFIELD
(*ATALANTE*)

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
Blue, &c.*

You are hereby required and directed, in the sloop you command, to proceed close along the French coast in the Bay as far as St. Gilles, for the purpose of gaining intelligence and intercepting the enemy's armed vessels, and coasting trade. You are also to give protection to Pichegru and Georges, who have lately left Paris, or any persecuted Royalists who may stand in need of your assistance.¹

¹ Pichegru had been betrayed and taken in Paris on the night of February 22nd, 'by means of the most infamous treachery that a man can be guilty of,' says Bourrienne. He was imprisoned in the Temple, and, after being examined many times, was found dead in his cell on April 6th. The author of *Bourrienne et ses Erreurs* says that upon the unhappy soldier's table lay a Latin Seneca open at the place where Seneca says that, when public liberty is despaired of, the upright man has nothing to do but to die. Georges Cadoudal, who had been one of the chiefs in La Vendée, was arrested on March 9th, tried with the other royalists, condemned, and executed on June 25th. Before his death he besought Murat to procure the pardon of his accomplices.

You will communicate this, with an injunction of secrecy, to the captains or commanders of any ships or vessels of the squadron you may meet with, continuing upon this service three weeks. unless, from the circumstance of your having anything of importance to be communicated, you should be induced sooner to return, when you are to join me, with all possible expedition, off Ushant, or wherever else you may learn I am at the time with the squadron.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 16th March, 1804.

No. 227

*CAPTAIN F. L. MAITLAND TO LORD GARDNER*¹

Loire, at sea, 17th March, 1804.

My Lord,—I have the honour of informing you that last night, after a chase of seven hours, his Majesty's ship under my command captured the *Brave*, of St. Malo, a ship-privateer, carrying sixteen twelves and sixes, with a complement of 110 men. She is coppered, appears to sail fast, and had been out of Lorient three weeks without having made any captures.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
F. MAITLAND.

No. 228

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 23rd March, 1804.

Sir,—The state of the sick on board his Majesty's ship *Foudroyant* making it necessary that she should

¹ Covering letter to the Admiralty, dated at Cork, March 24th, 1804.

go into port for their removal, you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I have directed Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves, who is serving on board her, to proceed to Cawsand Bay for the purpose of landing the sick at Plymouth and the refreshment of her crew in general, to replenish, and rejoin me.

Rear-Admiral Graves, who has been watching the motions of the enemy, has by my direction left copies of the orders he was under from me with Captain Jervis, of the *Magnificent*, who is at present the senior captain off of Brest, with four ships under his orders,¹ to watch the enemy's motions.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

P.S.—It has been reported to me that a three-deck ship came out to the outer Road of Brest on the 20th instant.

No. 229

CORNWALLIS TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

You are hereby required and directed to proceed with the ships named in the margin² with all possible expedition off Rochefort, where you will find his Majesty's ships *Minotaur* and *Boadicea*, which you are to take under your orders, and to cruise, with those ships, off that port, for the purpose of intercepting a squadron of the enemy's ships and transports, if they should attempt to put to sea from that

¹ *Magnificent*, *Impétueux*, *Montagu*, and *Colossus*.

² *Prince of Wales*, *Téméraire*, *Defiance*, *Goliath*.

port, where they are said to be ready to sail upon some expedition.¹

You are to communicate to me by every opportunity any intelligence you may be able to obtain relating to the enemy, and continue upon this service until further order.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 25th March, 1804.

[Mem.—Sent orders to the captains of the *Téméraire*, *Defiance*, and *Goliath* to follow the orders of Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder.]

No. 230

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 27th March, 1804.

Sir,—You will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Captain Jervis, of the *Magnificent*, has informed me he spoke a Prussian galliot coming out of Brest the 24th instant. From her he learned that there were three ships of three decks and sixteen of two decks in Brest Road, and three fitting in the harbour—the three-deck ship, which was mentioned to have come out lately, is the *Napoléon* [*sic*]; and that no ship of war had sailed. Could learn no intelligence as to their going to sea, the master having been attended by a sentinel when walking the streets.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

¹ Sir Robert Calder had been cruising with the *Prince of Wales*, *Conqueror*, and *Terrible* off Cape Clear. He was recalled by 'most secret' orders dispatched by the *Rambler* on March 15th.

No. 231

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 29th March, 1804.

Sir,—I am extremely sorry to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the loss of his Majesty's ship *Magnificent*, upon a sunken rock off the Black Rocks. I have not yet heard the particulars from Captain Jervis, but I have the satisfaction to hear that the men are saved.¹

There has been a large French store-ship at anchor near Conquet for some days, attended by 3 gun-vessels. It was Captain Jervis's intention to endeavour to take her, or at all events to prevent her getting into Brest, which I very much fear this accident will have given the enemy an opportunity of effecting.

It is supposed she came from the eastward, was very deep, and, of course, as Captain Jervis very well judged, an object of importance to intercept.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 232

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN MARTIN
(IMPÉTUEUX)

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

The enemy having a very considerable force at Brest, said to be upon the point of sailing, it is,

¹ Captain Jervis and the officers and company of the *Magnificent* proceeded to Plymouth in the *Colossus*. The *Magnificent*,

therefore, of the utmost national importance that the port should be as closely watched as possible.

You are hereby required and directed, in the ship you command, to proceed immediately off Brest, with the ships named in the margin,¹ for the purpose of watching that port.

Should the enemy put to sea you are to give me—off Ushant—the earliest notice by the frigates, or small vessels stationed there, under your direction. In the meantime you are at a proper distance to observe their motions and the course they steer, keeping between the enemy and the squadron with me, and by spreading your ships, communicate to me the route they are taking, to enable me to pursue them without loss of time with the whole force. You will, if you find convenient opportunities, endeavour to retard the progress of the enemy, the better to enable me, with the heavy ships, to get up; and you are to inform me upon any change of the enemy's ships or movement in the roads.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 31st March, 1804.

[On April 2nd Captain Prowse, in the *Sirius*, was directed to carry certain stores and men to *Sir Robert Calder*, off *Rochefort*, and then to cruise for ten weeks off *Cape Finisterre*, to protect the trade

74, built at Deptford in 1766, was lost on March 25th through running upon a sunken and uncharted reef near the Black Rocks. She was one of the finest 74's in the fleet, and had been engaged in almost continuous service. She had been completely restored and repaired at Plymouth about five years before the disaster. The officers and men were saved by the boats of the inshore squadron. See No. 237, p. 306.

¹ Montagu, Venerable. *Sir Thomas Graves* from the command of the inshore squadron proceeded to Cawsand Bay in the *Foudroyant*, which needed to be refitted and repaired, and Captain Martin was in command inshore after the departure of Captain Jervis.

and intercept the enemy's cruisers. He was to be on the look-out for French ships from the Mediterranean or ports in the Bay, and to give timely warning to Sir Edward Pellew, off Ferrol. On April 11th Captain Elphinstone, in the *Diamond*, was instructed to cruise off Santander, into which port English merchantmen had been carried by French privateers, and he was to be on the watch for a French store-ship lying there and laden with masts and stores for Brest. At the time Captain D'Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon, was supplying information to the English of the movements on the French coast.]

No. 233

*THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON TO
CORNWALLIS*

Mansion House, 9th April, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour of transmitting to you the accompanying resolutions of the Corporation of London, expressive of its high admiration of the distinguished conduct and unparalleled exertions, which add fresh lustre to the character of the British navy, and prove that unwearied perseverance is equally its characteristic with the most undaunted heroism.

It affords me the highest satisfaction to be the medium of communicating sentiments so congenial to the feelings of the whole nation.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

J. PERRING, Mayor.¹

¹ Sir John Perring, Bart., Lord Mayor of London, November 1803.

INCLOSURE

PERRING, MAYOR

A Common Council holden in the Chamber of the Guildhall of the City of London, on Monday, the 26th day of March, 1804 ;

Resolved unanimously that the thanks of this Court be presented to Admiral Cornwallis, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Cotton, Rear-Admirals Cuthbert Collingwood, Sir Robert Calder, and Sir Thomas Graves, Captains Sir Edward Pellew and John Sutton, commanding the fleet blockading the ports of Brest and Ferrol ; to Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson commanding the fleet blockading the port of Toulon ; to Rear-Admiral Thornbrough and Captain Sir Sidney Smith commanding the fleet blockading the Texel and the ports of Holland ; for the very eminent services rendered their country, for their great zeal and uncommon exertions by which our enemies have been kept in a constant state of alarm, nor dared for a moment to show themselves upon that element which has so often been the scene of their defeat and disgrace.

Resolved unanimously that the thanks of this Court be given to the captains, officers, seamen, and marines on board the respective fleets for their exemplary conduct and their strict regard to discipline whilst blockading the ports of the enemy during a length of time, and with difficulties arising from bad weather, unparalleled.

WOODTHORPE.

WM. JONES, Clerk to the
Common Council.

[Cornwallis, in acknowledging the communication on April 16th, said that it would inspire himself

and his officers with an anxious desire to render essential service to the country. He pointed out that a mistake had been made in omitting the name of Captain Domett—‘the first captain, who ranks as rear-admiral, and has served at sea, with his accustomed zeal, during the whole winter.’]

No. 234

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the Blue, &c.

[An order identical with that given to Captain Martin, March 31st. (See No. 232.) The ships placed under Sir Thomas Graves’s orders were the Venerable(flag), Impétueux, Montagu, Indefatigable, and Aigle, with the Joseph and Sheerness cutters. Captain Martin had held the command of the in-shore squadron pending the return of Sir Thomas Graves.]

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 11th April, 1804.

No. 235

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th April, 1804.

Sir,—I have received your letter dated the 2nd instant, and therewith, by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, for my information, the copy of a letter from Lord Keith, and an extract of the journal of his Majesty’s Revenue cutter the Lively, by which it appears that the Boadicea had been chased from her station.

A French line-of-battle ship and frigate came out of Rochefort, Captain Maitland informed me, and chased the Boadicea under his command. They ventured but a very short distance from the land, and returned to their former anchorage. I desired Captain Maitland to return immediately, and endeavour to decoy them from the shore, as he might immediately expect the Minotaur and other ships.

The Atalante has brought the inclosed report from Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, dated the 6th instant, by which it appears all the enemy's ships were at their anchorage.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

INCLOSURE

The state of the Enemy's force in the port of Rochefort, 6th of April, 1804 :

One ship of 100 guns.

Two ships of 84 guns.

One ship of 74 guns.

Three very large frigates and two corvettes.

These are lying in the mouth of the river ready for a start.

Two or three miles higher up there is an 80-gun ship, also ready in every respect for sea, which I believe is not brought down and meant as a deception.

There is also a large two-deck ship, which was launched about seven weeks since, which is in great forwardness. This latter account I learn from various neutrals, which have come out of that port, and have been spoken with by the Boadicea.

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 236

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, Betanzos Bay, 11th April, 1804.

Sir,—I arrived here on the 5th, and on the 10th inst. received the inclosed from Mr. Frere.¹ The Endymion having called off to-day, I forward it for your information. The enemy's ships here are as before reported, with the difference of the Argonaute fitting, and the Guerrière, frigate, got over to Ferrol (it is said to be docked), provided the Duguay Trouin cannot get over, which I hope she will not be able to effect. I have just time to inclose the abstract of the weekly accounts, and as the Nimble will sail in a few days shall take the opportunity of writing more at large.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE

LORD NELSON TO MR. FRERE.

Victory, off the Hyères Islands, 8th March [1804].

Sir,—Since I had the honour of writing to your Excellency last January of my belief that the enemy were either put to sea, or upon the eve of it,² a small squadron of frigates got alongshore into Villefranche, and from thence in the dark nights and gales of northerly wind crossed over to Corsica and carried 1,000 men with them; and, from the number of troops collected and collecting in the south of

¹ The Tonnant had been refitted in Cawsand Bay. Cornwallis's orders to Pellew to resume his command, which had been exercised *ad interim* by Captain Sutton, were issued on March 29th. He was to take under his orders the Mars, Northumberland, Malta, Spencer, Ganges, Dragon, Phoenix, and Nimble cutter.

² See Inclosure B, with No. 209, p. 275.

France and northern parts of Italy, with the preparation of transports both at Genoa and Leghorn, to which added, by accounts from Naples of February 14th, that the French army had baked a month's bread, makes it certain that an expedition must be intended. I have every reason to believe that the French fleet would have put to sea several times since I wrote your Excellency, but for the knowledge of our still keeping the seas. Should the ships from Ferrol put to sea, it would be most desirable for me to have the very earliest information of it in order that I may take a station, so as to prevent their junction, for it will naturally be more advantageous for me to fight each separate than when they are united. Although that is my fixed determination, a victory cannot be expected. Yet I think that we can and shall prevent their going upon any expedition.

As I have no opportunity at present of writing to England, I shall be obliged to your Excellency to say here I am, which will very much oblige

Your most obedient humble servant,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

No. 237

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th April, 1804.

Sir,—The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have examined the chart of Rear-Admiral Knight,¹ as well as that issued from the Hydro-

¹ Captain John Knight, by direction of Earl St. Vincent, surveyed the Iroise passage or Bay of Brest from Ushant to the Saints, and the Glenan Isles, and the Ile Houat, in 1800, and the chart was published in sheets in 1802, with nautical observations. In consequence of the loss of the *Magnificent* the Admiralty directed Captain Hurd to make a fresh survey.

graphical Office by their order, and cannot make the rock upon which the Magnificent appears to have been lost, by the bearings given in evidence at the court-martial, in any way to agree with the former; and, as their Lordships feel much concern at the accident, and are anxious to prevent a similar occurrence in future, they have directed me to select a fit person, who may be used to surveying, to examine the spot in question, and ascertain the exact position of that upon which the Magnificent was lost—as also whether it has any connection with the Black Rocks by a reef extending from them—and to take the relative bearings of the different points and rocks from each other, as well as latitudes, none of which are noticed in the charts above described, in order that some judgment may be formed of their accuracy, while their Lordships endeavour to find a person qualified to make a survey of that part of the French coast. I have, therefore, sent the Rambler to you as a proper vessel to employ, and I should suppose Captain Martin, of the *Impétueux*, who was present at the time of the accident, and has had much experience there, will be able to give you such information as their Lordships at present require, or that some proper person in the ships with you may be employed under him for that purpose. You will, therefore, be pleased to keep the Rambler until you have been able to get the information their Lordships are desirous of obtaining, which you are to send to me by her without loss of time. I understand the stump of the main-mast is above water. The spot therefore, if nothing has been yet done about it, must be easily ascertained. Captain Martin, I believe, mentioned some observations upon the subject when he came on board the *Ville de Paris* with Captain Jervis, and I have no doubt but

that he is perfectly well acquainted with every circumstance as to the rock on which the Magnificent unfortunately struck.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 238

SIR THOMAS GRAVES TO CORNWALLIS

Venerable, at anchor off Brest, 19th April, 1804.

[*Extract.*]

I have the honour to acquaint you, in answer to your letter of the 16th instant, that the day after my arrival here, I sent the master and pilot of this ship to ascertain the position of the rock on which the Magnificent was lost. Their report made it to be the Buffalo, which agrees exactly with the position of that rock as laid down in the French Neptune, as well as nearly so with that laid down in the Hydrographical Chart you did me the honour to send me, but according to their report extremely erroneous in that of Rear-Admiral Knight.

The wreck of the Magnificent is now removed about a cable's length to the eastward, and part of it still above water. The late gale of wind has prevented, until yesterday, our carrying your orders into execution. I shall have the honour of inclosing you Captain Martin's report as soon as he has made it, he being now again employed on that service.

Whenever the Foudroyant joins, I mean to employ Captain Puget, who is a very good surveyor, with what assistance this little squadron can afford him, to explore the whole of the bay, and I doubt not shall shortly be able to send you a much more correct survey than has yet made its appearance, and

particularly of the St. Vincent's Channel, Passage du Raz, and Douarnenez Bay, which latter I do not think will afford any other advantage to the blockading squadron than that of a place of shelter from shipwreck, as the enemy can make known all our motions there by telegraph to the fleet in Brest, without a possibility of our knowing what they are doing, and with a northerly wind they can pass to windward of us without being discovered.

I am likewise informed it is possible for them to get out of Brest when the westerly swell, which always succeeds such winds, might prevent our squadron from leaving Douarnenez Bay, besides the risk of being attacked there by a superior force from Brest.

In the gale on the night of the 16th, the Colossus was forced to sea and lost the fluke of her bower-anchor, but rejoined us the next morning; the Rambler also lost the stock of her anchor, and had her cable much rubbed by rocks (as was that of the Colossus), which shows there must be many spots of rocky and foul ground in this bay.

The latitude of the Buffalo Rock laid down in the French chart is $48^{\circ} 20'$ N., longitude $3^{\circ} 53'$ W. of the meridian of London.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOMAS GRAVES.

No. 239

CAPTAIN PATRICK CAMPBELL TO CORNWALLIS¹

Doris, off Pointe du Raz, 30th April, 1804.

Sir,—Having observed, on the clearing up of a fog, a number of gun-brigs, boats, and *chasse-marées*,

¹ Covering letter to the Admiralty, dated off Ushant, June 7th, 1804. Captain Charles le Bozec, commander of the flotilla, de-

anchored at the entrance of Audierne harbour, I stood in at night, and anchored as near as I could to protect the boats, which were dispatched under the orders of Lieutenant Anderson, who succeeded in bringing out the gunboat No. 360 of the second class, carrying one eighteen-pounder and thirty men, but, owing to a rapid and heavy surf which broke at the harbour's mouth, as well as their being protected by strong batteries, prevented his being more successful. I am sorry to say I lost a man on the occasion.

I am, &c.,
PATK. CAMPBELL.

No. 240

*NAPOLEON TO DECRÈS*¹

Saint-Cloud, le 11 floréal, an XII (1st May, 1804).

Monsieur Decrès,—Je n'ai pu voir qu'avec beaucoup de mécontentement que, malgré mon intention bien soutenue que les vaisseaux en rade de Brest levassent l'ancre tous les jours, afin d'exercer les équipages, de harceler l'ennemi et de favoriser le passage de la flotille d'Audierne, aucun vaisseau, pendant tout le cours de l'année, n'a appareillé, de sorte qu'on a permis à l'ennemi de bloquer, avec un petit nombre de bâtiments, une escadre con-

scribed the action in a letter to Caffarelli. The formation was in two columns, the second-class boats nearest the mainland. Captain le Bozec was in the middle of the other column, and, owing to the darkness, could not see the most distant gunboats. No. 360, under command of Sub-Lieutenant Dubois, was cut off at the end of the line, notwithstanding the attempts of Sub-Lieutenant Kerensec, in one of the larger boats, to save her. 'Cette sortie a été très désagréable pour moi,' Captain le Bozec concludes.

¹ *Correspondance de Napoléon avec le Ministre de la Marine*, Paris, 1831, i. 1.

sidérable. L'Amiral Truguet, dans le compte qu'il vous a rendu, n'ayant justifié par aucune raison suffisante l'inexécution de mes ordres, mon intention est qu'il soit rappelé et remplacé immédiatement par un officier actif, qui ait l'habitude des mouvements, qui soit allé depuis peu à la mer, et qui sache que la perte de plusieurs mois passés dans l'oisiveté est irréparable.¹

Vous ferez connaître à ce nouvel amiral que des escadres légères doivent journellement harceler l'ennemi, et qu'il convient que tous les vaisseaux, chaque fois que le temps le permet, appareillent et remouillent, ne courussent-ils que quelques bordées. Vous prescrirez que, sous quelque prétexte que ce soit, on ne s'écarte en rien de ces dispositions. Leur exécution précise produira l'effet qu'on doit se proposer, de tenir en alerte l'ennemi et les équipages en haleine, d'exercer l'armée aux deux opérations les plus difficiles, appareiller et mouiller, et de l'accoutumer à l'ensemble nécessaire pour profiter d'une circonstance favorable.

L'ordre d'appareiller ne sera donné aux escadres légères que par un signal où l'amiral, dans le compte qu'il vous rendra journellement, fera connaître le temps que chaque bâtiment aura mis à appareiller. Les bâtiments qui appareilleront seront, autant qu'il sera possible, accompagnés de quelques caïques dont les vaisseaux fourniront les équipages. Il doit se présenter dans le cours de l'été un grand nombre d'occasions où ces caïques pourront être très utiles.

J'ai ordonné au Ministre de la Guerre de faire fournir le nombre de soldats nécessaires comme garnison pour qu'il y ait deux cents hommes sur chaque vaisseau de guerre. Ces hommes seront

¹ See note following No. 256, p. 338.

exercés, indépendamment des manœuvres basses, à nager dans les grandes chaloupes des vaisseaux. L'amiral, pour encourager les soldats, leur fera sentir combien ils se rendront utiles pour la descente, et leur présentera l'exemple des troupes campées sur les côtes qui passent les journées entières à nager dans les bâtiments de la flotille. Prescrivez à l'amiral d'accorder des prix aux soldats qui monteront sur les vergues, et faites sentir aux contre-amiraux et aux capitaines des vaisseaux qu'il n'est rien que des chefs ne puissent obtenir des sentiments d'honneur et de l'émulation dont le soldat français est animé. Mettez à la disposition de l'amiral les fonds nécessaires pour ces arrangements. C'est l'occasion de remarquer combien serait stérile l'observation des capitaines qui n'ont pas de matelots, si on ne prenait pas les moyens propres à en former.

Enfin chaque vaisseau doit être approvisionné d'un certain nombre d'obus de 36, chargés avec la roche à feu. L'amiral inspirera confiance aux officiers dans ces mobiles, et en fera tirer fréquemment dans les exercices aux canons. Vous lui enverrez une instruction imprimée qui fera connaître la manière de placer l'obus dans le canon, et vous recommanderez de ne se servir d'obus qu'à petites portées. Cette instruction sera mise à l'ordre de l'armée.

Je n'ai pas besoin de rappeler que l'amiral ne doit point avoir de logement à Brest, et qu'il doit passer des mois entiers sans quitter la rade ; que les capitaines de vaisseaux ne doivent jamais aller à terre, et que les officiers de corvée doivent toujours être des officiers inférieurs.

Sur ce, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait en sa sainte garde.

NAPOLÉON.

[Truguet was superseded at the end of the month. On July 2, Latouche-Tréville received instructions similar to the above at Toulon. See No. 274, p. 360.]

No. 241

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 2nd May, 1804.

Sir,—I have had the honour to receive your letter, dated the 23rd of last month, written by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, acquainting me that, in pursuance of the King's pleasure, they had sent a commission for me to be Admiral of the White Squadron, which I have had the honour to receive, and request that you will be pleased to assure their Lordships that I feel sensible of their attention to me upon this occasion.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 242

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 2nd May, 1804.

Sir,—I had the honour this day to receive your two letters dated the 25th and 26th of last month, with the commissions for the flag officers therein mentioned, sent to me by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships that I have, according to their direction, caused those for Vice-Admirals Cotton and Collingwood, and Rear-Admirals Graves and Domett, to be delivered to them, and I shall, the moment I can do so, forward the others to Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder

and Rear-Admiral Cochrane. My secretary will receive the described fees, and account for the same as their Lordships desire.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 243

SIR EDWARD PELLEW TO CORNWALLIS

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 9th May, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that his Majesty's frigate *Niobe* arrived here on the 6th instant, bringing Captains Jervis, Oswald, and Pym to supersede myself, Captains Sutton and Cochrane, who have received notification of being made flag officers in his Majesty's fleet.

After having made the necessary arrangements, I left the squadron in charge of the Hon. Rear-Admiral Cochrane, who was directed by their Lordships' order to hoist his flag on board the *Northumberland*.

It appears to be the intention of the French Commodore, Gourdon, to refit his squadron in Ferrol, and to seize with eagerness the first moment for bringing over the *Duguay-Trouin* to be docked. The *Héros* and *Redoutable* are both now stripped, and their guns out ready to haul into the arsenal. The *Argonaute*, lately out of dock, is rigged and nearly ready to haul into the road. The frigate *Guerrière* is in the arsenal getting in a new foremast and bowsprit. The *Revanche* frigate at Corunna, and a schooner (*aviso*) are, it is confidently said, charged with dispatches for the Cape and India. The *Duguay-Trouin* being foiled in her attempt to get over when the dock was vacant, the Spaniards have occupied it by a ship which, the Captain-General

informs me, will not be out before July. The other dock is occupied by a ship under thorough repair.

The wants of his Majesty's squadron are confined in a great measure to small articles, stores of different sorts, and particularly pursers' necessities, which cannot be procured in this country. I therefore thought it right to call regular demands for your inspection and directions. The state of the *Malta* I had the honour to forward by the *Nimble*, and she is kept at anchor in *Ares Bay*. The *Dragon*, were it possible to spare her, ought to be docked before winter, a great deal of her copper being off her bottom. The *Ganges* is undergoing a sort of refit in *Ares Bay*. The *Dragon* would have done the same, but she has not the materials. The crews of the whole are in high health and spirits, and supplies of fresh provisions, regular wine, and bread have been purchased as occasion required, and five hundred bags of the latter were ready to be sent on board on the day I left the port.

The utmost cordiality prevails between the Spaniards and the squadron, and upon every occasion their civilities are uniform. I have no doubt, from the readiness with which they supplied an anchor to the *Malta*, but stores of any sort may be procured and supplied from the arsenal as readily as they are to the French ships, if their Lordships should choose to resort to that measure.

The Spanish squadron are perfectly at a stand. No crews have been called in, nor is any exertion expected.

The *Phoenix*, on her return from *Santander*, I sent down to *Vigo* and *Oporto* upon hearing the unfortunate accident to his Majesty's ship *Apollo* and her convoy, under the inclosed orders.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ED. PELLEW.

INCLOSURE

State of the Spanish force at Ferrol

1. Three-decker of 100 guns.
2. Two-decker of 80 guns.
3. Two-decker of 70 guns.

All lying in the arsenal under a commodore, Churruca,¹ rigged, holds partly stowed and guns on board, officers joined, but no crews ; and have ceased fitting these two months past.

The garrison of Ferrol reduced to the peace establishment, and many of the guns in the forts dismounted. The number of troops are between three and four thousand, and all the militia completely disbanded and returned home.

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 9th May, 1804.

ED. PELLEW.

State of the Enemy's force at Ferrol and Corunna

Argonaute, 74	{	Came out of dock April 10th, is rigged, her hold stowed, and nearly ready to haul out into the outer road.
Héros, 74 Redoutable, 74		Lower masts unriggered, guns inshore, preparing to haul into the arsenal to careen and refit. The Héros' people to go into the Argonaute, where Monsieur Gourdon is to hoist his broad pennant.

¹ The famous and heroic Spanish seaman, Don Cosme Damian de Churruca, who was in command of the San Juan Nepomuceno at Trafalgar, and was killed in the battle.

Fougueux, 74	{ In the road, ready for sea as before.
Guerrière, 40	{ In the arsenal, careening and getting in a new foremast and bowsprit.

At Corunna

Duguay-Trouin, 74	{ Waiting an opportunity of getting over to Ferrol to be docked, as she had been on shore in San Domingo and her bottom injured.
Revanche, 36 Schooner <i>aviso</i>	{ Ready for sea, and said to have on board dispatches for the Cape of Good Hope and India.

Tonnant, off Ferrol, 9th May, 1804.

ED. PELLEW.

No. 244

COCHRANE TO MR. MARSDEN

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 9th May, 1804.

Sir,—Be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that I had the honour to receive their Lordships' order of the 24th ulto., directing me to hoist my flag on board the Northumberland, and to put myself under the command of the Honourable Admiral Cornwallis, Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels employed in the Channel soundings, &c., which I have this day done by transmitting a copy of their Lordships' order to the Admiral.

As the command of the squadron has devolved upon me in consequence of the departure of Rear-

Admirals Sir Edward Pellew and Sutton, be pleased to inform their Lordships that I will, to the utmost of my power, follow up the orders given to Sir Edward Pellew, and I take this occasion to request that you will be pleased to signify to their Lordships how truly sensible I am of the honour they have done me in directing my flag to be hoisted.

I am, &c.,

ALEX. COCHRANE.¹

No. 245

MR. MARSDEN TO CORNWALLIS

Admiralty, 12th May, 1804.

Sir,—I have it in command from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you the inclosed order, to be delivered to Rear-Admiral Domett, empowering him to hoist his flag on board the *Ville de Paris*, in case of your death, while he may be employed as your first captain—an event which they sincerely trust is not likely to happen,

¹ Rear-Admiral the Hon. Alexander Forrester Inglis Cochrane (1758–1832) was appointed to the Northumberland, 74, on the outbreak of war in 1803. His recent service had been with the detached squadrons of Pellew and Warren in the Channel, 1799, in the expeditions to Quiberon Bay and Ferrol, and afterwards in superintending the landing of the troops in Egypt, a service for which he gained the high praise of Lord Keith. On the recall of Pellew in May 1804, he hoisted his flag as rear-admiral in command of the squadron off Ferrol. He sent home intelligence of the Spanish armaments which led to the capture of the treasure ships off Cape Santa Maria (October 5, 1804). Something of feverish anxiety characterised his vigilance, and James takes the exaggerated view that the readiness at Ferrol existed mostly in his imagination. He was off the port in February 1805, when Missiessy left Rochefort, and was dispatched in pursuit. He visited Madeira, Barbadoes, and Jamaica, and was appointed commander-in-chief at the Leeward Islands.

though they have judged this measure of precaution to be necessary.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
WM. MARSDEN.

No. 246

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 13th May, 1804.

Sir,—I have this day received your letter, dated the 3rd instant, written by command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to acquaint me that they have directed Captain Hurd to join the squadron for the purpose of making a survey of the coast in the neighbourhood of Brest.¹

You will be pleased to acquaint their Lordships, I shall, agreeably to their directions, furnish him with every assistance that may be in my power in the execution of this service.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 247

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the White, &c.

As the enemy in Brest Road are now reported to be in force, and ready for sea, they may perhaps take the chance of being brought to action in attempting to obtain their object, which, among others, is now said to be the getting up Channel.

¹ Captain Hurd went out in the *Terrible* at the end of June, and proceeded in her to the advanced ships under Sir Thomas Graves.

You will, therefore, with the ships under your direction, form an advanced squadron, keeping distinct from those with me, and occasionally stand in shore—particularly early in the morning—when the wind may be judged favourable for the enemy to sail, for the purpose of receiving and communicating to me the quickest possible information of their motions from the frigates, &c., on the look-out, taking the greatest care that the ships with you are not separated from the main squadron should the enemy proceed to sea; and have always in your recollection that, in the present state of our force, it is of the utmost consequence that single ships should not be disabled.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris, 13th May, 1804.

No. 248

*CORNWALLIS TO THE RESPECTIVE CAPTAINS
AND COMMANDERS*

General Memorandum

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having observed paragraphs in the public papers which they very much disapprove, said to come from the squadron, containing reports of occurrences on board, as well as relative to the enemy's force at Brest, which are frequently false, and always improper to publish :

The respective captains and commanders of his Majesty's ships and vessels under my orders are enjoined to state the evil tendency of such proceedings to the officers and men on board the ships and vessels under their command, and to direct that it may be in future discontinued; but that every accommodation will continue to be given for their

private communications with their relations and friends.

Given on board the *Ville de Paris*, off Ushant,
14th May, 1804.

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 249

CAPTAIN OTWAY TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

Montagu, at sea, 15th May, 1804.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of this day's date, I have the honour to inform you that, some days since, I had seen with much indignation in a newspaper the paragraph respecting a conspiracy in this ship. I had, in consequence, made every inquiry to find out the officer said to have sent that intelligence, but without effect, as they all deny ever having written any such information. I have again, on receipt of your letter, made a second inquiry, and received the same answer. I therefore hope the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will be pleased to prosecute the editor of that paper, as part of the statement alluded to is *untrue*.

I feel I am but doing bare justice to this ship's company in stating, for their Lordships' information, that they are an orderly, well-behaved set of men; and I am well convinced will do their duty to their King and country in a gallant manner whenever this ship comes into action.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

R. W. OTWAY.

[On May 9 the Admiralty had sent to Cornwallis an extract from the *Morning Herald* of the same day, purporting to be a copy of a letter from an officer on board the *Montagu* on the subject of a

mutiny in his ship, the object being to discover the writer with the view of checking 'communications of that improper and dangerous tendency in the future.' The mutinous spirit may not have been rife in the ship, but there was a gang of disaffected men, of whom James Dunn, Patrick Gorman, and Edward Plunket were tried by court-martial on June 19th, and condemned to death. An abstract of the proceedings will be found under that date. (No. 268, p. 351.) Two of the men were hanged in Cornwallis's squadron. There was a mutinous spirit also in the Pickle. The case of John Sneedon has been referred to. A more serious instance was reported by Cochrane to Cornwallis on June 2nd, when the schooner was off Ferrol. Thomas Boswell swore another man upon a book, believed to be 'The Rights of Ireland,' to 'aid and assist Bonaparte with all his power and might on every occasion.' Several men were to have deserted to the French ships at Corunna, towing Boswell, who could not swim.]

No. 250

CORNWALLIS TO COCHRANE

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 16th May, 1804.

Sir,—The Diamond I have sent to you with orders. She has been a long time at sea, and therefore must return to me immediately to be sent into port. The demands brought up by the Niobe the night before last I have forwarded to Plymouth. But I do not know when I shall have a ship that I can send over to you, as the enemy appear in force at Brest, and we are rather short at present. The enemy at Ferrol do not appear, by Sir Edward Pellew's report, to be in a very active state, and you

will now have as many ships as the French have, were they all together. I have represented to the Admiralty that you will want provisions and pursers' necessaries. It would be well if the latter could be obtained where you are. You can take out of the Malta and Tonnant such as they may be able to spare.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 251

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 17th May, 1804.

Sir,—I request you will be pleased to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the report made to me by Lieutenant Ussher, who looked into Brest Road yesterday, was twenty-nine sail of ships and a brig, of which twenty were three- and two-deckers, all to appearance ready for sea.

The Venerable having unfortunately a bad fever on board, of which several of the men have died, I sent Mr. Kein, surgeon of the Ville de Paris, this day to inspect, and directed Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves to send that ship into port, should it be found necessary, shifting his flag into some other of the ships with him. This will reduce the force with me to fourteen of the line, three frigates and cutters inshore watching the enemy.

I beg of you also to state to their Lordships that the ships with Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder off Rochefort are getting low in the different articles, and that I see no prospect of being able to relieve them, unless more ships can be sent to join the squadron.

When I send ships to Cawsand Bay only to re-

plenish, the dockyard people take them in hand, and a ship which I expected would stay a week is by that means frequently detained in port several weeks, and sometimes months, which occasions a great reduction in the force under my command, and will also prevent me from relieving the ships with the quickness I could wish.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 252

CORNWALLIS TO SIR THOMAS GRAVES

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 17th May, 1804.

Sir,—I have received your letters of the 16th inst., with the several papers and reports therein mentioned.

Rear-Admiral Domett has shown me a note he received from the captain of the Venerable, by which, as far as I could make it out, the sickness on board has increased. I have therefore sent the surgeon of this ship to examine into the state of the sick on board. I have no hospital ship with me, and removing men to another line-of-battle ship that has been longer out for a passage to the hospital may occasion the sickness to spread. If, therefore, Mr. Kein is of opinion that the fever on board is of as much consequence as to render the separation necessary, you are to shift your flag and remove to some other ship with you, and, putting from them any other sick men Mr. Kein may think necessary to send into port, direct the captain of the Venerable to proceed, without a moment's loss of time, to Cawsand Bay to land the sick, and return as soon as the state of the complement on board shall be made up to enable him so to do in a state

for service. The Windsor Castle, being ordered into the Hamoaze instead of returning again immediately as I expected, reduced our force very much.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 253

SIR SIDNEY SMITH TO LORD KEITH¹

Antelope, off Ostend, 17th May, 1804.

My Lord,—Information from all quarters, and the evident state of readiness in which the enemy's armaments were in Helvoet, Flushing, and Ostend, indicating the probability of a general movement from those ports, I reinforced Captain Manby off Helvoet with one ship, and directed Captain Hancock, of the Cruiser, stationed inshore, to combine his operations and the Rattler's with the squadron of gunboats stationed off Ostend.

The Antelope, Penelope, and Aimable occupied a central position in sight both of Flushing and Ostend, in anxious expectation of the enemy's appearance. Yesterday, at half-past five A.M., I received information from Captain Hancock, then off Ostend, that the enemy's flotilla was hauling out of that pier, and had already twenty-one masted vessels and one schooner outside in the Roads; and at half-past seven the same morning I had the satisfaction to see the Flushing flotilla of fifty-nine sail, viz., two ship-rigged praams, nineteen schooners, and thirty-eight schuyts, steering along shore from that port towards Ostend under circumstances which

¹ Covering letter to the Admiralty, dated Ramsgate, May 20th, 1804.

allowed me to hope I should be able to bring them to action. The signal was made to the Cruiser and Rattler for an enemy in the E.S.E., to call their attention from Ostend. The squadron weighed the moment the flood made, and allowed of the heavier ships following them over the banks. The signals to chase and engage were obeyed with alacrity, spirit, and judgment by the active and experienced officers your Lordship has done me the honour to place under my orders. Captains Hancock and Mason attacked this formidable line with the greatest gallantry and address, attaching themselves particularly to the two praams, both of them of greater force than themselves, independent of the cross fire from the schooners and schuyts. I sent the Aimable by signal to support them. The Penelope (having an able pilot, Mr. Thornton), on signal being made to engage, Captain Broughton worked up to the centre of the enemy's line as near as the shoal water would allow, while the Antelope went round the Stroom Sand to cut the van off from Ostend. Unfortunately our gunboats were not in sight, having, as I have understood since, devoted their attention to preventing the Ostend division from moving westward.

The enemy attempted to get back to Flushing, but being harassed by the Cruiser and the Rattler, and the wind coming more easterly against them, they were obliged to run the gauntlet to the westward, keeping close to the beach under the protection of the batteries.

Having found a passage for the Antelope within the Stroom Sand, she was enabled to bring her broadside to bear on the headmost schooners before they got the length of Ostend. The leader struck immediately, and her crew deserted her. She was, however, recovered by the followers. The artillery

from the town and camp, and the rowing gunboats from the pier, kept up a constant and well-directed fire for their support. Our shot, however, which went over the schooners, going on shore among the horse artillery, interrupted it in a degree. Still, it was from the shore we received the greatest annoyance, for the schooners and schuyts crowding along could not bring their prow guns to bear without altering their course towards us, which they could not venture ; and their side guns, though numerous and well served, were very light. In this manner the *Penelope* and *Antelope* engaged every part of their long line from four till eight, while the *Aimable*, *Cruiser*, and *Rattler* continued to press their rear. Since two o'clock the sternmost praam struck her colours and ran on shore ; but the artillerymen from the army got on board, and she renewed her fire on the *Aimable* with the precision of a land battery, from which that ship suffered much. Captain Bolton speaks much in praise of Lieutenant Mather, who is wounded.

Several of the schooners and schuyts immediately under the fire of the ships were driven on shore in like manner and recovered by the army. At eight, the tide falling, and leaving us in little more water than we drew, we were reluctantly obliged to haul off into deeper water to keep afloat ; and the enemy's vessels that were not on shore or too much shattered were thus able to reach Ostend. These and the Ostend division have hauled into the basin.

I have anchored in such a position as to keep an eye on them ; and I shall endeavour to close with them again if they move into deeper water. I have to regret that, from the depth of the water in which these vessels move, gunboats alone can act against them with effect. Four have joined me,

and I have sent them in to see what they can do with the praam that is on shore.

I have great satisfaction in bearing testimony to your Lordship of the gallant and steady conduct of the captains, commodores, officers, seamen, and marines under my orders. Captains Hancock and Mason bore the brunt of the attack, and continued it for six hours against a great superiority of fire, particularly from the army on shore, the howitzer-shells annoying them very much. These officers deserve the highest praise I can give them. They speak of the conduct of their lieutenants, officers, and crews in terms of warm panegyric. Messrs. Budd and Dalyell from the *Antelope* acted in the absence of two lieutenants of those ships. Lieutenants Garrety and Patfull, commanding the *Favourite* and *Stag* cutters, did their best with their small guns against greater numbers of greater calibre. Lieutenant Hillier, of the *Antelope*, gave me all the assistance and support on the quarter-deck his ill state of health would permit. Lieutenant Stokes and Mr. Slessor, acting lieutenant, directed the fire on the lower and main decks with coolness and precision. It would be the highest injustice if I omitted to mention the intrepid conduct of Mr. Lewis, the master, Mr. Nunn and Mr. Webb, pilots, to whose steadiness, skill, and attention, particularly the former, I shall ever feel myself indebted for having brought the *Antelope* into action within the Sands, where certainly the enemy could not expect to be met by a ship of her size; and for having allowed her to continue engaged with Commodore Verhuel to the last minute it was possible to remain in such shoal water with a falling tide.

It is but justice to say the enemy's commodore pursued a steady course notwithstanding our fire, and returned it with spirit to the last. I could not

detach open boats into the enemy's line to pick up those vessels which had struck, and were deserted, mixed as they were with those still firing. Captain Hancock sent me one schuyt that had hauled out of the line and surrendered. She had a lieutenant and twenty-three soldiers of the 48th Regiment, with five Dutchmen on board. She is so useful here I cannot part with her as yet. Inclosed is a list of our loss, which, though great, is less than might have been expected, owing to the enemy's directing their fire at our masts. The Rattler and the Cruiser have, of course, suffered most in the latter respect, but are nearly ready for service again. The smoke would not allow us to see the effect of our shot on the enemy; but their loss, considering the number of them under our guns for so long, must be great in proportion. We see the mast-heads above water of three of the schooners and one of the schuyts which were sunk.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. SIDNEY SMITH.

Return of killed and wounded on board his Majesty's ships and vessels under the orders of Commodore Sir William Sidney Smith, in action with the Enemy's flotilla on its passage from Flushing to Ostend, May 16th, 1804

Antelope	{	Two seamen and 1 private marine wounded.
Penelope	{	Three seamen killed, and 4 seamen wounded.
Aimable	{	Mr. Christie, master's mate, Mr. Johnson, midshipman, 4 seamen and one boy killed; Lieutenant W. Mather, Mr. Shadwell, purser, Mr. Connor, midshipman, and 11 seamen wounded.

Cruiser	{	One seaman killed ; Mr. George Ellis,
		clerk, and 3 seamen wounded.
Rattler	{	Two seamen killed, and 5 seamen
		wounded.

Total :—Two petty officers, 10 seamen, and 1 boy killed ; 1 lieutenant, 1 purser, 4 petty officers, 25 seamen, and 1 private marine wounded.

W. S. SMITH.

No. 254

SIR R. CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Rochefort, 25th May, 1804.

Sir,—Having placed the Goliath and Boadicea—the two best sailing ships, and well acquainted with the shoals—close off Rochefort to watch the movements of the enemy there, and to secure the entrance of this port, keeping the other three ships of the squadron under my direction in the offing within sight of signals from them, it is with very great regret I have to inform you that a French frigate has got into Rochefort in spite of us, owing to the foggy and hazy weather we have lately experienced off this place. Every exertion was made by Captains Brisbane and Maitland to cut her off. They did not give over the pursuit until she had got very far into the Pertuis d'Antioche, and they had approached very near a part of the enemy's squadron there, who were under way to support the entrance of this frigate. Unfortunately she had, during the fog, got so very near the entrance of this port before she was seen by our ships, and having the advantage of the flood-tide, made it impossible for them to prevent her getting in. I am led to believe this frigate came from Bordeaux, where I understand from neutrals a frigate has been lying

for this month past, as she appeared to be just out of port, and from the enemy's squadron getting under way so expeditiously the instant the frigate was seen from their signal-post, I conclude they had been apprised of her being expected at Rochefort from Bordeaux. I have inclosed you a copy of Captain Brisbane's letter to me upon this unpleasant business, as also a copy of his statement of the enemy's force he saw in the port of Rochefort.

I have the honour to be, &c.,
ROBT. CALDER.

INCLOSURE A

CAPTAIN BRISBANE TO SIR ROBERT CALDER

Goliath, off Rochefort, 22nd May, 1804.

Sir,—In obedience to your signal to proceed to the anchorage No. 4 for the purpose of more narrowly watching the enemy's squadron, I have the honour to inform you of the proceedings of his Majesty's ship Goliath since that evening. This day, the 22nd, saw a sail at half-past 8 A.M., distance about two leagues. The weather being then very hazy had prevented our discovering her sooner. Made all possible sail in chase; at half-past 9 discovered her to be a frigate; made the Boadicea's signal also to chase. Directed the Goliath to be steered for Chassiron, under the hope of being able to cut her off. At eleven the French frigate was enabled to pass the shoal extending from Chassiron; she then fired a broadside at the Goliath which fell short, when the battery opened on us. Of course I had no inclination to return it, having decided to lay the frigate on board, conceiving the firing of guns would impede the progress of the ship under my command. Having proceeded considerably up the

Pertuis d'Antioche with a strong flood-tide and inclinable to calm, and observing three sail of the line of the French squadron, two frigates, gunboats, &c., under way for the purpose of protecting the frigate, I directed the Goliath's broadside to be fired immediately with the hope of disabling her masts. I am sorry to say it had not the desired effect, and not being able to discover your squadron at that time from the mast-head, owing to the thickness of the weather, the wind being then S.W. —right on shore—of course I was satisfied you would find it necessary for the safety of your squadron to haul off to the westward. I did not think it prudent to bring their line-of-battle ships to action in that situation, therefore directed the Goliath to be wore, and brought to about midway between Chassiron and Ile d'Aix under a hope they might be inclined to follow me. At one the enemy returned to their anchorage.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

C. BRISBANE.

Seen in the Port of Rochefort.

- No. 1. A first-rate, bearing a rear-admiral's flag.
- „ 2. A line-of-battle ship, with sixteen ports, bearing a broad pennant.
- „ 3. A line-of-battle ship.
- „ 4. A line-of-battle ship.
- „ 5. Doubtful, but I believe a line-of-battle ship; she was anchored at some distance up the river.
- „ 6. Two frigates.
- „ 7. The frigate that escaped.
- „ 8. Two brigs of war.
- „ 9. Gunboats, small crafts, &c.

C. BRISBANE.

INCLOSURE B

Intelligence gained from the American ship Little John, from Rochefort bound to New York, by Lieutenant Thomas Simons, of his Majesty's ship Defiance, on the 28th May, 1804.

The master of the said ship states that there are five sail of the enemy's line-of-battle ships lying in the Roads, with three frigates and six gun-brigs.

One sloop of war and twelve gun-brigs arrived from Bordeaux the 23rd instant, which make together nineteen sail. Ten or twelve large armed transports, with troops on board expecting to sail.

A new frigate, launched a few days since, but had not joined the squadron. Several small gun-boats in the harbour.

The frigate chased in, and so near being cut off by the Goliath and Boadicea, was from Bordeaux, where she had landed Jerome Bonaparte from America. Two ships of the line cut their cables to support her. He was informed an express had arrived on Saturday last, stating that the preliminaries of peace were signed at Paris. He further says that he was advised to sail, as an embargo would certainly be laid on in a very few days.

The enemy's vessels are in a perfect state of readiness to sail, and the general opinion at Rochefort is that the expedition would certainly leave France the early part of June.

P. C. DURHAM.

[The work of construction at Rochefort and Lorient was at this period retarded by want of materials. Admiral Thévenard, naval Prefect of Lorient, sent a demand to M. le Vacher, and re-

ceived a reply to the effect that the port of Brest made the same demand, and that the Minister's orders were that that port should be favoured. Admiral Thévenard protested against the building of 80-gun ships and others smaller at Brest, which port he said would be sufficiently occupied with the large building work in hand, and with refits, repairs, and the preparation of important expeditions. Rochefort and Lorient would furnish ships of the line of 80 and 70 guns, and frigates and corvettes; Dunkirk, Havre, St. Malo, Nantes, Bordeaux, and Bayonne, frigates, corvettes, gun-vessels, store-ships, and harbour-service craft. If such vessels were constructed at Brest, the operations of the other ports would be retarded and spoiled. Thévenard to Decrès, 8th Prairial, year XII (May 28th, 1804). *Arch. de la Marine*, B.B.³, 230, f. 129.]

No. 255

COCHRANE TO CORNWALLIS

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 26th May, 1804.

Sir,—Nothing particular has occurred since the sailing of the *Diamond*, which ship left this anchorage the 24th. Yesterday the *Malta* sailed, and last evening a convoy of forty-six sail appeared off here under the *Amelia*, and they are in sight just now. Should the wind blow strong to the westward, I will recommend their anchoring in Ares Bay until a change takes place.

I enclose for your information a copy of a letter I have written to Mr. Hunter, the British Consul at Madrid. I assure you I have a hard battle to fight with the people here. They have been so accustomed to dishonest practices that it is no easy matter to bring

them again within bounds. I trust, however, that the measures I have hitherto pursued may meet with your approbation. If I could only be supplied with bread and coals, I will feel perfectly independent, and, as I took the liberty of stating in my former letter that the latter of those articles might be brought in water-butts, I beg leave also to add that, besides what bread the ships can stow otherwise, a large quantity might be brought here in the same manner. The ships that bring it might complete their water by the assistance of the other launches in a few hours after their arrival.

I hope for your indulgence for offering my opinion, which I beg you will impute to its true cause; my wish to promote the good of his Majesty's service.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ALEX. COCHRANE.

INCLOSURE

COCHRANE TO CONSUL-GENERAL HUNTER

Off Ferrol, 26th May, 1804.

Sir,—Situating as Great Britain now is, from being engaged in a most expensive war, it behoves every servant of the Crown to use his best endeavours to have the different departments under Government served at the cheapest rate, and to the utmost of his power to correct existing, as well as to prevent future, abuses upon this ground. I am induced to call upon you, as his Majesty's Consul-General at Madrid, to afford me your aid in repressing an evil which appears to increase daily—I mean the exchange upon bills which the merchants here, knowing the necessity there is for this squa-

dron being supplied, have raised from 36 to 38, and I suppose will increase in their demands.

I have therefore to beg of you to endeavour to find out a house of respectability at Madrid, who will agree to supply the squadron with money, taking Government bills at thirty days' sight for the same; and as I have now, or shall have soon, a very considerable sum to draw for, I beg to be favoured with your answer, as I prefer paying the merchants here in hard money. It will therefore be necessary for those entering into this agreement to establish a credit for me at Corunna, his correspondent receiving bills upon the delivery of the sums demanded. By this means the exchange will be entirely taken out of the hands of the merchants here, and the British Government fairly dealt by.

The shameful abuses that have existed hitherto you will hardly credit. I have to inform you that in many articles nearly cent. per cent. has been charged against Government by Mr. Fitzgerald, the person appointed to victual this squadron by Sir Edward Pellew. I have reduced the price of meat from 8*d.* per pound to 4½*d.*, wine from 3*s.* 4*d.* per gallon to 2*s.*, and other things in their relative proportion to the price of the day.

You may judge from this how necessary it is for my receiving every support, as you cannot suppose that Mr. Fitzgerald could have made all this money without allowing those here to participate in the advantage, and, to crown the whole, he drew upon Government at forty pence the current dollar, by which he put about 8 per cent. more in his pocket.

I therefore trust to your exertions for being assisted to beat down this combination, if you approve of it, until an agreement can be introduced. Mr. Hort, my secretary, will draw upon you, or any house at Madrid, for the money that may be wanted,

for which he will send at the same time bills upon the Commissioners of the victualling for the amount to be negotiated at Madrid.

I beg to be favoured with your sentiments by return of post, as a considerable sum is now wanted to pay for the victualling of this squadron. I have further to state that, although the duties upon beef and wine are at present suspended, yet the merchants keep up the prices of those articles, under the pretence of the probability that they may be called for; this may make a difference of 17 per cent. I have therefore to beg that you will, in the absence of Mr. Frere, make such a representation to the Spanish Government as to have this matter cleared up. I cannot bring myself to believe that it is intended to impose a duty upon the articles supplied to this squadron which they do not demand from French men-of-war lying within three miles of us.

I am, &c.,

ALEXR. COCHRANE.

P.S.—I beg to know what good Catalonian wine per pipe could be sent round and delivered to the ships at or off this anchorage.

No. 256

CAPTAIN STOPFORD TO COCHRANE

Spencer, off Corunna, 29th May, 1804.

Sir,—I have to acquaint you that yesterday evening, close in with the island of Sisarguas, I recaptured the English bark, Castle Douglas, that had been taken off the Orkneys on the 3rd instant by l'Hirondelle, French privateer-brig of 14 guns and 73 men. The privateer belongs to Dunkirk, but sailed last from Santander on the 11th April.

I.

Z

The Castle Douglas when taken was on her voyage from Liverpool to Rostock with a cargo of sundries—viz., coffee, earthenware and salt—and when retaken was going to Santander. The wind being favourable for her proceeding to England, I immediately dispatched her to Plymouth with a prize master and eight men from this ship.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBERT STOPFORD.

[May 31, 1804 (11th Prairial, an XII). On this day, Decrès, Minister of Marine, informed Caffarelli, naval Prefect at Brest, that the Emperor had called Admiral Truguet 'to new functions,' and that Rear-Admiral Missiessy would exercise the command of the squadron at Brest, pending the arrival of the admiral chosen (Ganteaume) to succeed Truguet.—*Arch. de la Marine*, B.B.², 96, f. 121.]

No. 257

COCHRANE TO LORD MELVILLE

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 4th June, 1804.

[*Extract.*]

I think if I had some more small vessels under my orders I could do a great deal in destroying the enemy's privateers and recapturing their prizes, which now meet with hardly any obstacle whatever. Their rendezvous is Vigo, and the port of Santander, Pasages, Bilbao, &c., &c.

If I can only be supplied with bread and fuel from England and occasionally stores, I think that this squadron may be kept cheaper, by nearly one half, than the ships off Brest; the victualling I have

reduced to a system in which any successor of mine has only to follow the beaten path.¹

I am sorry to say that this squadron is very short of men. Was I permitted to give 5*l.* bounty here, I think I could get a good many, at the same time giving a small allowance to those that bring them.

The Spencer takes in nearly thirty men in ulcers belonging to this ship, a complaint more contagious than I ever supposed. I have been forced to hire a piece of ground, where they are now in tents, to save the rest of the ship's company from infection.

No. 258

LORD MELVILLE TO COCHRANE

[*Extract.*]

I shall talk with the Naval Lords on the subject of your request for some more small vessels, and I hope to be able to send you a couple or more if it be possible. I don't see myself any objection to the proposition you have made for giving the bounty, provided you can obtain good men; but, before you take any steps in the business, it will be necessary

¹ On June 2 Cochrane reported to Cornwallis that the ships at Ferrol were getting very low. It was almost impossible to procure biscuit, and he had contracted for soft bread to save what remained, but flour was scarce, and there was no certainty of the supply. The contractor, however, supplied excellent beef, and Cochrane had procured a considerable reduction in the rate of exchange. In case the ships were not to be relieved it would be absolutely necessary to send out stores, unless the Admiralty wished them to be purchased on the spot, which he thought generally unadvisable. In the same letter Cochrane sent Cornwallis a private letter of Nelson's to Sir Edward Pellew, which arrived when that officer had left the station. It contained information of 'consequence,' but I have not found it.

for you to have the authority of the Board. I shall therefore speak to their Lordships upon the subject on Monday.

No. 259

COCHRANE TO MR. MARSDEN

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 5th June, 1804.

[*Extract.*]

[After reference to the Spencer having been injured by going ashore in a fog between Capes Prior and Prioriño, the ship being so much injured that she had to go home.]

The situation of the enemy's ships is much the same as it has been for some time past. I do not think that the four sail at Ferrol upon an average have above 300 men each ; many of the French as well as the Dutch seamen wish to desert, and if the means was afforded I dare say their numbers would be greatly reduced. The dissatisfaction has been much increased by the late news from France, as they seem to be more inclined to be under their hereditary monarch than Bonaparte as Emperor. Their ships are undergoing a regular repair, and they will soon be completely fitted for sea, when I suppose they will bring men round from France to complete their complements. Most of the men they have now on board are seamen, and the Duguay-Trouin at Corunna, together with the Revanche and Guerrière frigates, are completely manned ; the latter is going to heave down. The Spaniards are only fitting out one small two-deck ship, and she is to carry timber to Cadiz ; they are almost totally destitute of stores and depend upon the merchants of the town for all their supplies—they have not a pound of biscuit in store.

No. 260

COCHRANE TO MR. MARSDEN

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 6th June, 1804.

Sir,—I have just received accounts from Ferrol that a report prevails which is said to have arrived this morning from Rochefort, that the French squadron had put to sea full of troops, and that an embargo was put on all vessels now in the ports of France. I inclose also a state of the ships in Ferrol Harbour as taken this morning by Lieutenant Hodge of this ship.

I am, &c.,

A. COCHRANE.

INCLOSURE

Statement of the Enemy's Ships in this Port.

Ferrol, 6th June, 1804.

The Commodore apparently ready, with one more, but no sails bent. One completely dismantled, and not a gun on board.

The Dutch ship completely rigged, but very light; three topsails only bent. The ship of the line in the arsenal will not get into the dry dock until the Spanish ships come out, which may be one month. The frigate in the arsenal heaving down, completed on one side; the gun-brig and schooner ready for sea. The Commodore has bread on board for six months. One ship with another has not more than 300 men each.

No. 261

SIR R. CALDER TO CORNWALLIS

Prince of Wales, off Rochefort, 8th June, 1804.

Sir,—The Fox cutter joined me yesterday afternoon, bringing your dispatches dated the 5th instant. Nothing material has happened since my last by the Hawke, dated the 29th ulto. On the 4th instant, I celebrated his Majesty's birthday at an anchor in the entrance of the Pertuis d'Antioche, in full view of the French squadron, distant from them about five miles; they consist of two sail of the line, three frigates, two corvettes, two brigs, and about twelve large armed transports with troops on board, all perfectly ready for sea. There is another line-of-battle ship, and a frigate, building at Rochefort, which they expect will be launched in about six weeks. On the 4th and 5th instant there were forty sail of neutrals came out from Rochefort, who report they were directed to sail before the 6th, as an embargo was to be laid on all shipping there for a month.

[Proceeds to give an account of the provisions and water in the ships (Prince of Wales, Goliath, Minotaur, Defiance, and Boadicea, varying between a fortnight and a month). He feared the two last-named would have to leave the squadron.]

If I am driven to this, before I get a reinforcement I shall keep the remaining three ships off the Isle Dieu, until I am joined by some other ships, as my force will then be too small to venture down off Rochefort. You will therefore be pleased to direct any ships coming to look for me, first off the Isle Dieu, in their way to my rendezvous.

I learn from an American ship, who was in at

Bordeaux when the French frigate arrived there from America, that Jerome Bonaparte was not brought home in that ship, as was said, and that he has not, as yet, arrived in France.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBT. CALDER.

No. 262

*CAPTAIN WHITBY TO CORNWALLIS*¹

Newlands, Monday, 11th June, 1804.

[The letter opens with Captain Whitby's account of his arrival in England, and an expression of his desire to serve with Admiral Cornwallis. He had landed at Dover, and been to 'White's among the politicians,' whose views he reports.]

By-the-bye, I want to communicate one thing to you which appears to me of great consequence; and, but that our seas are so clear, and our posts go so safe, I should have first sent you a cipher, by which it could have come to no one's knowledge

¹ A private letter from Captain John Whitby, in the possession of Colonel Cornwallis West. Captain Whitby, lately commanding the *Belleisle*, had come home from the Mediterranean in the *Fisgard*. It had been intended that he should be Cornwallis's flag-captain. In regard to the criticisms in this letter, the principles of Nelson's tactics of blockade will be remembered. His constant endeavour was to encourage the French to put to sea, 'for it is there we hope to realise the hopes and expectations of our country.' 'It is not my intention to close-watch Toulon, even with frigates,' he wrote; and he said to Admiral Pole, 'My system is the very contrary of blockading'—that is of the tactics which Sir Richard Bickerton had practised at Toulon. Latouche-Tréville had often cruised off Cape Sicié early in the summer of 1804. Nelson to Sir John Ball, June 7th: 'Do not think I am tired of watching M. Latouche. I have now taken up a method of making him angry. I have sent Sir Richard Bickerton, with part of the fleet, twenty leagues from hence, and, with five sail of the line, am preventing his cutting capers, which he has done for some time past.'

but yourself. It, however, may be told in very few words, and I shall do it. Though Lord Nelson is indefatigable in keeping the sea, there are so many reasons that make it possible for the French to escape through the Mediterranean, which, of course, Government are not told by him—and which, perhaps, he does not consider (at least I think so)—that I have been long determined to warn you of the circumstance upon my arrival, not choosing to trust it from the Mediterranean. First, then, he does not cruise upon his rendezvous; second, I have consequently repeatedly known him from a week to three weeks, and even a month, unfound by ships sent to reconnoitre—the Belleisle herself was a week; thirdly, he is occasionally obliged to take the whole squadron in to water, a great distance from Toulon; fourthly, since I came away the French squadron got out in his absence, and cruised off Toulon several days, and at last, when he came out, he only got sight of them at a great distance, to see them arrive at their own harbour. From all this I draw one general conclusion—that it is very possible for them to escape him. Upon the last occasion they might have got to the West Indies, or elsewhere, without the possibility of discovery, had they so chosen. And from all this, I draw these particular ones likewise, concurring with other circumstances: they have ten sail of the line at Toulon, one at Cadiz; four, I think, at Ferrol, six at Rochefort, and twenty, you say, at Brest, making in all one-and-forty sail of the line. If they pass Lord Nelson, they can relieve Cadiz (which is only blockaded by two frigates), Ferrol, Rochefort; and if in their way to Brest you meet them some morning, when they are attempting a grand junction, I shall not be surprised. I mention this to you that you may pay what attention you choose to this

scheme of probabilities, and have your ships so much in your eye at daylight that you may be prepared for their reception.

I write this in confidence to you, for I would not absolutely dare to give my opinion of the Mediterranean blockade to any other person; for doubtless my Lord Nelson is actuated by a thorough zeal to do right, for he is, indeed, a great and glorious officer. I must add one other thing, however, which is, that in gales of wind he drives so far away that the finding him is very difficult, and the enemy have the greatest chance. I have no doubt, therefore, that they *can* come out; the rest, the object, remains to be proved. I must tell you another thing. Gore in the *Medusa* is so inattentive, in my opinion, to his situation at Gibraltar, which I consider the picquet-guard of you and my Lord Nelson, and from which, and which only, you could reasonably hope for intelligence, that I would not advise you to trust to it. When I was there, three ships out of four were stripped for several days; this I think of the very last importance. I may have judged erroneously throughout, but there will be no harm in the hint, which I am convinced you can receive from no other quarter. God bless you, my dear Admiral! . . . I shall say no more than that I am your most sincere and affectionate friend,
J. W.¹

[Addressed to the Admiral at Plymouth, and endorsed by him: 'Ans. by Nimrod, 17th June.']

¹ In a letter from Nelson to Cornwallis the following occurs: 'As my old acquaintance and shipmate, Captain Hargood, is not arrived, I have directed Whitby to remain a short time in the Belleisle, in order to reap the harvest of all his toils. He has had uphill work in her, and I should wish him to enjoy the fruit alongside a Frenchman. I assure you I am not singular in regretting the loss of Whitby from our little squadron. It is

No. 263

CORNWALLIS TO MR. MARSDEN

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 12th June, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour of inclosing for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the Report of Lieutenant Fennell, of the Nile lugger—whom I sent in yesterday, upon the wind coming to the eastward, to make observations of the enemy's force in Brest Road.¹ He is not quite certain as to the exact number of three-decked ships, and he makes a rear-admiral flag less than has been before reported. He is, however, very sure there are twenty sail of the line.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 264

VICE-ADMIRAL GANTEAUME² TO NAPOLEON

Brest, 23 prairial, an XII (12th June, 1804).

Sire,—En prenant le commandement que Votre Majesté a bien voulu me confier, je range au rang

universal.¹—Clarke and McArthur. Captain Whitby died 7th April, 1806.

¹ The report, which is omitted here, gives particulars of the positions of the ships, and indicates the state of several of them.

² Vice-Admiral Count Honoré Joseph Antoine Ganteaume (1755–1818). At the time of the Peace of Amiens he was naval prefect at Toulon, but being promoted to vice-admiral in 1804, was appointed to the command in the Channel, and if he had been joined by Villeneuve was to have been commander-in-chief of the naval forces engaged in the projected descent upon England. Ganteaume's most famous service was in relation to Napoleon's descent upon Egypt. He was chief of the staff to Admiral Brueys, and escaped almost by miracle from the disaster

de mes premiers devoirs que de lui rendre compte de la situation de l'armée navale, du bon esprit, de la volonté bien décidée et du dévouement absolu de tous ceux qui la composent.

Arrivé le 19 du mois courant (8th June) à Brest, je me suis rendu le jour suivant sur la rade ; j'ai été reconnu dans l'armée, et j'ai fait arborer mon pavillon sur le superbe vaisseau le Vengeur. Le 21 et le 22, j'ai inspecté tous les vaisseaux, je les ai généralement trouvés dans l'ordre, la tenue et toute la propreté possibles. Si les vêtements des équipages ne sont point encore dans les règles et l'uniformité prescrites, c'est que la majeure partie des hommes qui les composent ne sont embarqués que depuis peu, et que leurs gages n'ont encore pu suffire à la dépense. Mais rien ne sera négligé pour que cette importante partie du service soit remplie le plus promptement possible.

La plus grande partie des vaisseaux de l'armée ne laisse rien à désirer pour la solidité et les bonnes qualités, et est par conséquent en état d'entreprendre telle campagne que ce soit, et s'il en est quelques-uns qui ne présentent pas les mêmes espérances, je ne dois pas en ce moment arrêter Votre Majesté sur cet affligeant tableau.

Je n'entretiendrai pas également aujourd'hui Votre Majesté sur la composition de mes équipages,

of the Orient at the Nile. At the request of Bonaparte he was promoted to rear-admiral, and was then in command of the French forces in the Levant, and was associated with many operations of the army. When the small squadron left Alexandria on August 22, 1799, bringing back to France Bonaparte and his fortunes, Ganteaume had his flag in the Muiron, and Bourrienne asserts that during the passage he so lost his head that Bonaparte himself assumed command. This story, as well, perhaps, as the statement ascribed to Napoleon at St. Helena, that he was *matelot nul et sans moyens*, seems to be discredited by the favours showered upon him under the Consulate and the Empire.

et je me bornerai à vous réitérer que vos ordres seront exécutés avec la dernière exactitude, que nous ferons par conséquent tout ce qui sera possible pour les exercer et leur faire acquérir l'expérience qui leur manque.

Je me dispose à organiser une escadre de vaisseaux que je destine à aller évoluer dans l'Iroise. De grands mouvements et même de simples évolutions dans la rade de Brest, sont impossibles ou extrêmement dangereux pour des vaisseaux de ligne. Il en est autrement dans les rades de Bertheaume, Camaret et St-Mathieu, où les espaces permettent le développement d'une escadre.¹

No. 265

COCHRANE TO LORD MELVILLE

15th June, 1804.

[Extract.]

Your Lordship will observe by the inclosed paper that the French are making every exertion to complete their squadron lying at Ferrol and Corunna. This reinforcement, which I expect to arrive by the 22nd, will do much towards it, as hitherto they have been without marines. I make no doubt but seamen will follow the same route, if they do not send them in small vessels across the Bay, landing them at the outports, from whence they will pass by land to Ferrol. Landsmen will answer. They are by no means deficient in seamen.² How far the Spaniards

¹ *Archives Nationales*, AF^{iv}, 1195, dossier 2, No. 2.

² 'What I expected has come to pass. The French are completing their complement of seamen from their ports on the Bay, while they receive soldiers through Spain from Malaga.'—Cochrane to Lord Melville, June 24. A French man-of-war arrived at Malaga from San Domingo with troops, and about 500, said by one of Cochrane's correspondents to be *chasseurs à cheval*, were reported to be marching on Corunna, to join the French fleet.

have adhered to their neutrality in suffering 300 men to march from one end of Spain to the other, in order to complete the equipment of the French squadron, is a matter that is not for me to decide upon.

INCLOSURE

Thirteen boats belonging to the French at Cedeira. Each boat has 26 men, armed only with small arms. They are under the command of a naval officer, and came from Bayonne laden with sail-cloth, bunting, cordage, &c., which is now transporting by land to the French squadron at Ferrol. Six more are hourly expected. The above boats do not exceed 14 tons each, and keep close in shore, never leaving port but when the coast is clear. The men are said to be as a recruit to the French ships, and the boats to be sold.

No. 266

CAPTAIN STOPFORD TO CORNWALLIS

Spencer, Plymouth Sound, 16th June, 1804.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you that on the 10th inst. I recaptured, in company with the *Indefatigable*, the English merchant ship *Lord North*, that had been taken on the 5th inst. by *les Représailles*, French privateer, on her voyage from Poole to Pictou.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

ROBERT STOPFORD.

The French Commodore was using every means to get his squadron ready for sea. He had now the means of supplying his great want of men, though through a channel, Cochrane wrote to Marsden, 'contrary to the system which ought to have been observed by a neutral nation.'

No. 267

VICE-CONSUL O'BRIEN TO COCHRANE

Santander, 5th June, 1804.¹

Sir,—I have had the honour to address you, on the 1st inst., per channel of Morrogh of Corunna, and that of Mr. Lambeye of Ferrol. I have now to inform you that on the same date, and after the mail departed, arrived in this port, from Riga, a very large Swedish ship of the burden of nearly 800 tons, completely laden with heavy spars for ship masts, and hemp, apparently consigned to a merchant of this city, who received a similar cargo last year, which I have since discovered to be for the French Government. As the Charente, a large armed *en flûte* or store-ship, was dispatched to this port from Rochefort to take in the spars, and has since returned, and got in without meeting with any of his Majesty's ships, I am confident, but cannot say how soon, some ship will also be sent here from Rochefort for the last cargo. I have learned from the captain of the Charente that at Rochefort they were very much in want of spars for masts and yards.

As the price of flour is rising very fast, and the quantity diminishing rapidly, by the very considerable supplies demanded for the interior of Castile, I beg leave to say that either bread or flour bought in England would turn out cheaper than it is possible to get it here or at Corunna.

I am, &c.,

LEWIS M. O'BRIEN.

¹ Inclosed with a dispatch of Cochrane's, June 16, in which he insists upon the great exertions being made by the French to complete their squadron, and alludes to the fact that a Spanish squadron had arrived at Cadiz from Havana with 14,000,000 dollars on board.

No. 268

[Abstract.]

*Minutes of proceedings of a court-martial held on board his Majesty's ship Salvador del Mundo in the Hamoaze on Tuesday, the 19th day of June, 1804.*¹

Present, John Sutton, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the Blue and second officer in command of His Majesty's ships and vessels at Plymouth, president ; Captains Davidge Gould, John Dilkes, Lord Henry Paulet, Peter Puget, Barrington Dacres, Hon. Robert Stopford, William Bligh, Hon. F. F. Gardner, Patrick Campbell ; Robert Liddell, Deputy Judge-Advocate. Capt. Otway, of H.M.S. Montagu, Prosecutor. James Dunn, Patrick Gorman, and Edward Plunkett, seamen of the Montagu, accused of having made a mutinous assembly and of seditious conduct tending to excite discontent amongst the ship's company.

John Ryan, seaman, deposed that a meeting was held in a berth on the lower deck of the Montagu, in the midships behind the after ladder. Plunkett brought a book. Gorman was in the berth, and Dunn came down from the sick berth with a list of men 'that was to be in the fact.' A great many came, and they began to swear, 'and out with the candle then.' They swore 'to be true and loyal and die together, and to stand true to that oath and not to discover.' James Dunn would let them know at the appointed time 'which way the gentlemen's heads lay.' Those to be put to death were Mr. Kelly, the second lieutenant, Mr. Lloyd, the master at arms, and Mr. Read, the master's mate, who, 'if they could not be struck with a knife, to take a shot, and hit them right over

¹ 'Courts-Martial,' 1804, No. 106.

the head with it.' Campbell, the captain of the head, said the business of putting these gentlemen to death did not go on so speedily. John Callaghan said in the berth, when the prisoners were present, that if ever the ship came to action, and they fought in the rigging, or any part of the ship 'that we could get at the captain, to take an aim at him.' Dunn, Plunkett, Gorman, and the witness used mostly to be together on this business. To the best of his belief the oath was taken before the *Magnificent* was lost. Gorman said, 'As you are a loyal man and come from a loyal country, you ought to be loyal alike together, as he was a Roman.' Gorman was to kill the master at arms, and Plunkett the master's mate, and Dunn was to inform them which way their heads lay.

The boats were going armed to cut out a French corvette near Brest. James Dunn said, 'Now, Ryan, if the action is going against us, you join the enemy and we will do the business ourselves.' It was before the *Magnificent* was lost. The mutineers numbered 15 or 16, but the prisoners were ringleaders. He did not know what would follow the death of the gentlemen; but Gorman said, 'Never fear, my boys, but I'll have plenty of assistance.' By 'loyalty,' he meant 'to free the country, and give room for the French to come in.' He never knew a man ill-treated in the ship.

Matthew Karney, seaman, deposed that, on the first night they arrived off Brest, Plunkett said to him that it would be an easy matter to carry the *Montagu* into the harbour. Plunkett said that during the former mutiny he was in a ship, and they would have had her in 'if it was not for a damn'd rascal that informed against them;' the password was 'A dark night, a sharp knife, and a bloody blanket.'

John Bryan, seaman, gave confirmatory evidence to the effect that he saw men taking an oath about the time the *Magnificent* was lost.

Patrick Tory, seaman, said he heard Dunn say to Gorman that he (Dunn) would see which way the gentlemen's heads lay.

Michael Pigeon and Richard Tobin, seamen, gave evidence in support of the charges.

The prisoners then placed a paper in the hands of the Judge-Advocate, impugning the character of Ryan, and saying they had written to Sir Fenton Aylmer 'to prove him a perjured man and an outlaw in his country.' They threw themselves on the benevolence and humanity of the court.

Loftus Buckley, James Read, John Murtaugh, and Edward Lattice having given evidence in favour of the prisoners, and Captain Otway and Lieut. Kelly having spoken as to their previous good conduct, the court was cleared and proceeded to deliberate upon the sentence.

The Court, having heard the evidence in support of the charges, as well as what the prisoners had to offer in their defence, and the evidence adduced on their behalf, and very maturely and deliberately weighed and considered the same, was of opinion that the charges had been proved against the prisoners James Dunn, Patrick Gorman, and Edward Plunkett severally, and, in consequence thereof, adjudged the said James Dunn, Patrick Gorman, and Edward Plunkett to be severally hanged by the neck until dead at the yard arms of such of his Majesty's ships and at such time or times as the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty shall direct.

ROBERT LIDDELL,
Deputy Judge-Advocate.

Warrants for the execution of the three men. Cornwallis to direct the execution of Gorman and Plunkett on board the Montagu on July 9th, and Admiral Young to have the third executed in such ship as he thought proper.

[Rear-Admiral the Earl of Northesk joined Cornwallis off Ushant on June 20th, in the Britannia, from Cawsand Bay.]

No. 269

VICE-ADMIRAL GANTEAUME TO NAPOLEON¹

Brest, 2 messidor, an XII (21st June, 1804).

Suivant les états de revue que j'ai eu l'honneur d'adresser au ministre de la marine, nous avons en ce moment sur la totalité des vaisseaux et frégates de l'armée un déficit de 2800 hommes de mer. A ce nombre il faut joindre 1069 hommes que nous avons aux hôpitaux, sur lesquels nous ne pouvons pas compter, et environ 400 à 500 hommes hors de service et inutiles qui, quoique à bord de nos vaisseaux, sont à réformer. On ne peut se faire une idée de la composition de ces derniers: ils sont faibles, valétudinaires, il y en a qui ont été réformés des corps militaires par invalidité; d'autres qui, âgés de 45, 46 et 50 ans, ont été embarqués comme novices. Tous sont enfin sans volonté, sans force et sans courage, et leur existence à bord de nos vaisseaux est un reproche pour ceux qui ont osé se permettre de les envoyer dans les ports et pour ceux qui les y ont reçus.

Je sais qu'il est impossible de nous procurer des

¹ *Archives Nationales*, A.F.^{iv}. 1195, dossier 2, No. 3.

matelots ; je n'en demande pas, mais je demande de suite des hommes indépendants, forts, bien constitués, et susceptibles d'acquérir quelque expérience nautique. Des conscrits ayant la taille, qui ne tiendront à aucun corps militaire, me paraissent les seuls hommes qui peuvent nous convenir ; nous n'obtiendrons jamais la docilité et les dispositions convenables de ceux qui auront déjà été incorporés et qui sont habitués aux exercices des régiments. Que Votre Majesté, Sire, donne des ordres positifs pour que 4000 et quelque cent conscrits de bonne composition nous soient destinés de suite, pour que nous ayons le temps de les exercer pendant le reste de la belle saison, et je lui réponds de l'organisation de l'armée.¹

[At this period Admiral Thévenard, naval prefect at Lorient, reported an unfavourable state of things there. On June 10th he had been obliged, though with difficulty, to issue a month's pay to the men, 'pour soutenir leur ardeur et ne les pas payer de paroles.' On June 27th, 22 boats of the 2nd division of the national flotilla joined 51 others which were already at Port Liberté. The number of seamen wanting was very large and could not be supplied, for to fill up the complement of the *Ville de Milan*, 'cette frégate dévorante,' it had been necessary to denude the brigs, schooners, and luggers of men and boys. Two days later, though he reported activity in the coastwise traffic, owing to the distance kept by the English ships

¹ The 25th regiment of the line, and two battalions of the 24th, had been ordered to be devoted to the service of the arsenal and the manning of ships at Brest. Decrès complained on Feb. 9, 1804, that the troops proved to be below strength, and that the battalions of the 24th had not been placed at the naval prefect's disposal.

in the prevailing weather, he said that everything was spoiled by the lack of money. He was informed that, in order to make good the deficiency of seamen, soldiers were to be entered on the books of the ships, and that monthly prizes, ranging from 3 francs to 8 francs, would be awarded for proficiency in boat-work, gunnery, and sail-drill. On July 5th he informed Decrès that sickness had broken out in the Ville de Milan, and that many men were ashore in hospital. The long sojourn of the flotilla of 73 boats at the port was harmful both from the physical and moral points of view, and he deplored that the law offered no means for the summary repression or punishment of abuses which were rife (*Arch. de la Marine*, B.B.³, 230, ff. 142, 158, 160, 162-167).

At Rochefort, Sir Robert Calder reported (June 16th) that the enemy had not changed in number, but two line-of-battle ships and a frigate were got under way at times on the flood-tide and plied to and fro for exercise in the Basque Roads. The ships before Rochefort were relieved at this time. The *Téméraire* rejoined Calder with bullocks and bread before June 16th; on the 22nd the *Hawke* was detached to join him, followed by the *Hero* and *Repulse*; and the *Defiance*, *Minotaur*, and *Boadicea* were sent to Cawsand Bay to replenish.

On June 21st, Cornwallis sent the *Illustrious* with two months' provisions, and to supply the squadron, to Cochrane off Ferrol, and when the *Windsor Castle*, *Terrible*, *Montagu*, and *Naiad* arrived off Ushant on June 26th further supplies were at once sent to him.]

No. 270

LIEUTENANT BOURNE TO CORNWALLIS

Felix, off Ushant, 23rd June, 1804.

Sir,—While executing your orders of the 29th May, His Majesty's schooner under my command had the good fortune to capture three out of four French *chasse-marées* that trade constantly between Bayonne and Santander. One, loaded with Indian corn from Bayonne, we captured off St. Martin's the 11th inst. ; the other two, having 61,529 dollars secreted on board, we intercepted on their passage from Santander to Bayonne on the 15th inst. One of these vessels being leaky and a bad sailer, we scuttled ; the other is in good condition and has 20 casks of broken glass on board. I have ordered her and the former one to Plymouth. The crews of the two dollar vessels escaped in their boats to Spain.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

RICHD. BOURNE.

No. 271

COCHRANE TO CORNWALLIS

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 24th June, 1804.

Sir,—The Nimble cutter arrived last evening ; delivered to me your dispatches of the 17th, in which I am directed to proceed in this ship to Cawsand Bay provided the ulcer cases have not abated ; but, as those that were most afflicted with this complaint went home in the Spencer, I do not conceive that the remaining ones require the immediate departure of this ship, more particularly as our force would thereby be too much reduced,

considering the present state of the enemy and the exertions they are making to complete their ships with men and stores. [Asks that men who have been sent home diseased shall not be returned, as the ulcers break out afresh, and the infection spreads rapidly.] It will be better to put up with loss than have the ship always in the state of hospital. We have now on shore 18 men in ulcers, who are getting better, but I dread that as soon as they are brought off their sores will again break out.

The inclosed information relative to the arrival of 13 small French vessels at Cedeira, five leagues from hence, is exactly what I expected, and by which the enemy will be enabled to complete the complements of their ships.¹ As those vessels never go above a mile from the shore, I see little chance of our being able to obstruct them during their passage. The French ships at Ferrol and Corunna are much in the same state as when I wrote last.

[Concludes by asking instructions as to the subject of Lord Robert Fitzgerald's letter inclosed.]

I have the honour to be, &c.,

A. COCHRANE.

INCLOSURE A

CAPTAIN DUFF TO COCHRANE

Mars, off Ferrol, 24th June, 1804.

Sir,—His Majesty's ship under my command being at present 81 short of complement, and only victualling 591, induces me to represent the same to you, particularly as, from her heavy metal, the guns are but weakly manned when she is complete.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEO. DUFF.

¹ The information referred to is that transmitted by Cochrane to Lord Melville on June 15th. See No. 265, inclosure, p. 349.

INCLOSURE B

LORD ROBERT FITZGERALD¹ TO VICE-CONSUL
WARRE, AT OPORTO

Lisbon, 9th June, 1804.

Orders have been sent to the Custom House to purchase, for the account of the Portuguese Government, fifteen thousand bags of cotton, which are to be sent to France in part payment of the sums stipulated for by the Treaty of Neutrality, without delay, and directions have been sent to the India House to dispatch the same to the amount of six hundred thousand milreis duty free. I understand that the remainder of the sum to be paid to France is to be made up in the article of dye-wood. Now, it appears to me that this is a fair object of seizure, if it could be laid hold of; and I should be glad if you would write to the officer commanding off Ferrol, apprising him of the circumstances, and giving it to him as my opinion that he would in these circumstances be justified in detaining every Portuguese vessel having such cargo, and sending her into a port in England, that he may be able to get hold of.

No. 272

CORNWALLIS TO CAPTAIN PATRICK CAMPBELL
(DORIS)

*By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the
White, &c.*

Having understood that the enemy's vessels, with supplies, have frequently passed through the Passage du Four to and from Brest, you are hereby required

¹ British Minister at Lisbon.

and directed immediately to proceed in the ship you command off Abervrac'h, where you are to cruise with the utmost vigilance, for the purpose of watching the Passage du Four, and to cut off the communication, by every endeavour to intercept those vessels, or any of the enemy's armed vessels you may be enabled to fall in with, continuing upon this service until you receive farther order.

Given, &c., Ville de Paris,

Off Ushant, 26th June, 1804.

No. 273

*LIEUTENANT FENNELL (NILE LUGGER) TO SIR
THOMAS GRAVES*

Intelligence received from a Danish brig, six hours out of Brest, 1st July, 1804. Twenty-nine ships of war in Brest Roads, viz. : 3 three-deckers, 21 two-deckers, and 5 frigates ; 4 corvettes, 34 brigs, and many smaller ones in shore. Nine sail of the line ready to come out, by the mate's account, and by one of the crew's information bound to the West Indies.¹ Only one admiral, and he lately come from Paris. An embargo was to be laid on all vessels after the day he (the Dane) sailed. No talk of peace or of a Russian war.

GEO. FENNELL, Lieut.

No. 274

*NAPOLEON TO LATOUCHE-TRÉVILLE AT
TOULON*

A la Malmaison, le 2 juillet, 1804.

[Opens with observations concerning the complements of the ships, and the gunnery and sea-

¹ Cornwallis, in transmitting this intelligence to the Admiralty, remarked that the report concerning the West Indies was probably

manship training.] Par le retour de mon courrier, faites-moi connaître le jour où il vous sera possible, abstraction faite du temps, de lever l'ancre. Faites-moi aussi connaître ce que fait l'ennemi, où se tient Nelson. Méditez sur la grande entreprise que vous allez exécuter, et avant que je signe vos ordres définitifs, faites-moi connaître la manière la plus avantageuse de les exécuter. . . . L'escadre de Rochefort, composée de trois vaisseaux, dont un à trois ponts, et de quatre frégates, est prête à lever l'ancre; elle n'a devant elle que cinq vaisseaux ennemis.¹ L'escadre de Brest est de 21 vaisseaux; ces vaisseaux viennent de lever l'ancre pour harceler l'ennemi, et l'obliger à avoir le plus grand nombre de vaisseaux. Les ennemis tiennent aussi six vaisseaux devant le Texel, et y bloquent l'escadre hollandaise, forte de trois vaisseaux, de quatre frégates, et d'un convoi de 20 bâtiments, où le Général Marmont a son armée embarquée. Entre Etaples, Boulogne, Vimereux et Ambleteuse, deux nouveaux ports que j'ai fait construire, nous avons 1800 chaloupes canonnières, bateaux canonnières, péniches, &c., portant 120,000 hommes et 10,000 chevaux. Que nous serons maîtres du détroit six heures et nous serons maîtres du monde.

[The instructions proceed to describe our strength off Boulogne, Ostend, Brest, and Cork.] Si vous trompez Nelson, il ira en Sicile, ou en Égypte, ou au Ferrol. Des cinq vaisseaux qui sont dans ce port, quatre seulement sont prêts, le cinquième le sera pourtant en fructidor [August and September]; mais je pense que le Ferrol est trop

intended to deceive. For Lord Melville's views suggested by Lieut. Fennell's intelligence, see No. 279, p. 366.

¹ On July 3 Cornwallis transmitted to the Admiralty Calder's information that the enemy at Rochefort had brought down another frigate lately launched.

indiqué, et il est naturel que l'on suppose, si votre escadre sort de la Méditerranée dans l'Océan, qu'elle est destinée à débloquer le Ferrol. Il paraîtrait donc meilleur de passer très au large, d'arriver devant Rochefort, ce qui vous ferait une escadre de 16 vaisseaux et de 11 frégates, et alors sans mouiller, sans perdre un seul instant, soit en doublant l'Irlande très au large, soit en exécutant le premier projet, arriver devant Boulogne. Notre escadre de Brest, forte de 23 vaisseaux, aura à son bord une armée et sera toujours à la voile, de manière que Cornwallis sera obligé de serrer la côte de Bretagne pour tâcher de s'opposer à sa sortie. Du reste, pour fixer mes idées sur cette opération qui a des chances, mais dont la réussite offre des résultats si immenses, j'attends le projet que vous m'avez annoncé, et que vous m'enverrez par le retour de mon courrier.

[Concludes by insisting upon the advantage of undertaking the operation before the winter, and with the remark that, if Latouche-Tréville put to sea before July 30th, he would probably not arrive before Boulogne until September, when the nights would be growing long, but the weather would not be bad for extended periods.¹ But Latouche-Tréville died on board the *Bucentaure*, at Toulon on August 19th, and on August 28th Napoleon was writing to Decrès that it was necessary to appoint to the squadron a better man than Dumanoir, in the person of Bruix, Villeneuve, or Rosily.]

¹ *Correspondance de Napoléon avec le Ministre de la Marine*, Paris, 1837, i. 5.

No. 275

CORNWALLIS TO LORD MELVILLE

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 9th July, 1804.

Dear Lord Melville,—As the Ville de Paris has some defects—much copper off, and I believe wants docking—I should be glad to be allowed to send her to Portsmouth. The men have been a long time at sea as well as myself, and therefore, if your Lordship thinks proper, I would go to Portsmouth in the ship, and be ready to go to sea with her as soon as she is ready, and your Lordship may think proper that she should proceed.¹

I have the honour to be, &c.,

W. CORNWALLIS.

No. 276

HON. ALEXANDER COCHRANE TO ADMIRAL
CORNWALLIS

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 12th July, 1804.

[*Extract.*]

[The provisions and coals sent out under the convoy of the Naiad have relieved the wants of the squadron, and it will be necessary to buy nothing but fresh beef from the shore. The Dolphin's convoy

¹ Admiralty Minute, 13th July.—‘Lord Melville having laid before the Board Admiral Cornwallis’s letter of the 9th inst., recommending that the Ville de Paris should be sent into Portsmouth for the refreshment of her crew, and in order for her being docked if found necessary, their Lordships are pleased to direct him to proceed with the said ship to Portsmouth as he proposes, leaving the command of the squadron to Sir Charles Cotton, furnishing him with such instructions as he may judge necessary, agreeably to the orders he has received.’

being valuable, and privateers being ready for sea, Captain Fremantle will see her across the Bay.]

Upon the night of the 6th, the Duguay-Trouin took the advantage of the absence of the moon and squally weather, when the look-out ship was standing off shore, to pass over to Ferrol, a thing she might have done almost any time these last six months past, when the wind was to the westward, as the distance from shore to shore is only five miles and a third. As the enemy's ships, with the exception of the *Revanche* frigate, are now in Ferrol, they will be more easily guarded.

The Spanish Government have lately sent orders to the Captain-General of the Arsenal to complete the French squadron as quickly as possible, and to take their own ships out of dock that the French ships may be taken in. The whole of the workmen in the yard are ordered on this service. Doctor Baird is now examining the hospital on shore; he will then inspect the ships of the squadron.

The French squadron are much in the same state as formerly. The vessels expected along-shore laden with naval stores &c. will, I hope, be intercepted by the *Nimble* cutter, who is looking out for them to the eastward of Cape Ortegal.

[On the same day Cochrane wrote to Marsden. Assured that many Dutch seamen would leave their ships and join the squadron, he had offered a bounty of five pounds. He believed French seamen would join on the same terms. In order to gain early intelligence of the enemy's movements he had ordered a lieutenant of one of the ships to reside at Ferrol 'upon the pretence of attending to the victualling of the squadron.' The Admiralty approved.]

No. 277

SIR THOMAS GRAVES TO CORNWALLIS

13th July, 1804.

[*Extract.*]

From Lieutenant Miln's great zeal and enterprising spirit in pursuit of a vessel, under St. Matthew's Point, he received such damage by a 42 pound shot, from the battery, as to make it requisite for him to go into port.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

THOS. GRAVES.

[The vessel captured by the Mary cutter was a galliot bound into Brest. Lieut. Miln reconnoitred the French and made the force 20 sail of the line; the frigates and corvettes as before.]

No. 278

COCHRANE TO LORD MELVILLE[*Extract.*]

Northumberland, off Ferrol, 13th July, 1804.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Hunter, the Consul-General at Madrid, to which is added by way of postscript: 'My report from Barcelona this morning (7th June) is that the French fleet of eight sail of the line and four frigates had left Toulon about the beginning of June (I know not exactly the day), and were offered battle by Lord Nelson with five sail of the line and two frigates, but declined it and returned to the port, although they had the wind. This report came yesterday

from Mr. Gibert, to whom it is written by Dr. Scott, Lord Nelson's chaplain.'¹

I have also a letter from Lord Holland which states the above, and that the French have prohibited the King of Naples from allowing supplies being sent to Lord Nelson, from which our fleet will meet with some inconvenience.

No. 279

LORD MELVILLE TO CORNWALLIS

Admiralty, 14th July, 1804.

[*Private.*]

Sir,—In some of the recent intelligence contained in your correspondence I observed that there was an appearance of an intention at Brest to send out from thence a part of the enemy's fleet to the amount of nine or ten sail.² If there was anything serious in that intention, it is impossible to believe that, with such a force, they could mean to come out with the view of meeting the fleet under your command, and it seems equally clear that, if the intention is to come on the coasts of either England or Ireland, they would never think of sailing with any force inferior to the whole of their fleet.

These considerations have led me to revolve in my own mind whether it was probable the enemy could have any other objects which should induce them to detach a part of their fleet from Brest for purposes different from the attack of England or Ireland. Our whole intelligence certainly tends to

¹ The report appears to be an exaggerated account of one of the 'capers' cut by Latouche-Tréville, though it could not have been the famous one of June 14th, vaunted as a French success, which so exasperated Nelson.

² See No. 273, p. 360.

the idea of their Brest force being intended for some part of the United Kingdom, and I am disposed to believe that to be the object most at heart. If, however, from any cause, they should doubt their success so much as to look for other objects, I have been considering what would be the most likely to be pursued by them, if they could succeed in escaping from Brest with a considerable detachment of their fleet.

In the first place, is it altogether out of contemplation that they might think of embarking a considerable body of troops on board their fleet with the view of seizing the Cape of Good Hope, or of making a serious attack on our colonies in the Leeward Islands? Secondly, would it not be a very material point for them if they could come unexpectedly on our squadrons blockading Rochefort and Ferrol? By such an operation they would not only hope to destroy these separate squadrons of ours, but relieve their own blockaded fleets, and enable them to reinforce their fleet at Toulon, so as to be superior to Lord Nelson in the Mediterranean. Lastly, is it quite out of the question that, without this intermediate operation, they might wish to render themselves superior at sea in some important quarter, and with that view send the detachment from Brest directly to the Mediterranean to join the fleet at Toulon?

I am aware that all these speculations proceed on the supposition of their escaping your blockade, which I believe to be very difficult. But there are so many examples of their having, on former occasions, succeeded in so doing, that it would be indulging an over-confidence to calculate upon this chance as altogether impossible under various contingencies.

If there is any solidity in any of these conjectures,

I dare say they must have occurred to yourself, and that you have taken your precautions for ascertaining, with as much precision as possible, the real destination, if any such circumstance should occur as the escape of any material part of the French force from the port of Brest; but I thought it my duty, in this private, unofficial form, to suggest to you what has occurred to me, and I should be glad to hear from you in what light the suggestions I have thrown out appear to you. I am free to confess that I conceive any of the objects I have mentioned would be more likely to annoy this country, in some of its most essential interests, than any desperate attempt they may meditate of an attack on any part of the United Kingdom, against such a superiority at sea as we possess.

I remain, sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,
MELVILLE.

No. 280

CORNWALLIS TO SIR CHARLES COTTON

By the Hon. William Cornwallis, Admiral of the White, &c.

You are hereby required and directed to cruise with the squadron to watch the enemy, who have a considerable force in Brest, reported ready for sea. The advanced ships under Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves have been reinforced in consequence of its having been said that a squadron of six ships of the line and three frigates were to go upon some expedition to the West Indies. Should the ships of the squadron be separated, and you should find those remaining under your orders much reduced in number,

you are to bear up for Torbay—should the wind be to the westward—to collect the squadron, and take the opportunity, during the continuance of wind, to supply the ships in water, and such other wants as are to be obtained at that anchorage ; taking care to put to sea the moment the wind should come round to the northward, or eastward, proceeding directly with all expedition off Brest, and, having obtained information of the state of the enemy from the frigates, or other ships stationed close off the mouth of that harbour, continue most diligently to watch the motions of the enemy. Should any circumstance or accident occasion the French squadron to escape without being observed by the squadron with you, or the ships cruising closer to the mouth of the harbour, you are not to follow them, unless you can be very sure of the route they have taken, or leave the mouth of the Channel unguarded, as the enemy might in that case take the opportunity to push up the Channel for the purpose of aiding the threatened invasion of his Majesty's dominions, the protecting of which at this particular time being the principal object of the force placed under my command.

Given, &c.,

Ville de Paris, off Ushant, 17th July, 1804.

[In pursuance of this order Sir Charles Cotton, in the *San Josef*, assumed the chief command in Cornwallis's absence. The *Ville de Paris* passed up the Channel on her way to Spithead on July 21st, and went into Portsmouth harbour on the 29th, to be refitted for Cornwallis's flag.]

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THE Council propose to include among the forthcoming volumes a collection of naval and nautical songs, ballads, broadsides, forebitters, shanties, &c., many of which—interesting reminiscences of the wars of last century and of the old navy of wood and canvas—live only in memory, and are fast dying out.

Such a work can only be carried out satisfactorily by the co-operation of many; what one has not, another has; what one has forgotten, another may remember; and an appeal is therefore made to the Members of the Society, and, through them, to their friends, and to all who take pleasure in fighting against the decaying influences of time, to send copies of any such verses (entire ballads or fragments—no fragments too small—with music when possible) as they may have or can write down from memory. It is hoped that in this way many pieces may yet be rescued from that oblivion which has already, it is to be feared, engulfed a great number.

The volume will be edited by Mr. Henry Newbolt (14 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, London, W.C.) and Mr. C. H. Firth (33 Norham Road, Oxford), to whom, or to the Secretary, all contributions and suggestions may be sent.

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